District of Columbia ESEA Flexibility

Request

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U.S. Department of Education
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RENEWAL FORM

SECTION I: COVER SHEET, WAIVERS, ASSURANCES AND CONSULTATION

Cover Sheet for ESEA Flexibility Request

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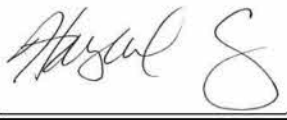
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X 	Date: March 31, 2015
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of ESEA flexibility.	

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WAIVERS

By submitting this updated ESEA flexibility request, the SEA renews its request for flexibility through waivers of the nine ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements, as well as any optional waivers the SEA has chosen to request under ESEA flexibility, by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested.

☒ 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.

☒ 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.

☒ 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.

☒ 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.

☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a school-wide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State's priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority

schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

☒ 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State's reward schools that meet the definition of "reward schools" set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

☒ 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.

☒ 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

☒ 10. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

☒ 11. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA's State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

☐ 13. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver in addition to waiver #6 so that, when it has remaining section 1003(a) funds after ensuring that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funds to carry out interventions, it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs to provide interventions and supports for low-achieving students in other Title I schools when one or more subgroups miss either AMOs or graduation rate targets or both over a number of years.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #13, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request that it has a process to ensure, on an annual basis, that all of its priority and focus schools will have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions prior to distributing ESEA section 1003(a) funds to other Title I schools.

Click here to enter page numbers where edits have been made and where new attachments have been added. Do not insert new text here – insert new text in redline into the revised request.

☒ 14. The requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and 1111(b)(3)(C)(i) that, respectively, require the SEA to apply the same academic content and academic achievement standards to all public schools and public school children in the State and to administer the same academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students. The SEA requests this waiver so that it is not required to double test a student who is not yet enrolled in high school but who takes advanced, high school level, mathematics coursework. The SEA would assess such a student with the corresponding advanced, high school level assessment in place of the mathematics assessment the SEA would otherwise administer to the student for the grade in which the student is enrolled. For Federal accountability purposes, the SEA will use the results of the advanced, high school level, mathematics assessment in the year in which the assessment is administered and will administer one or more additional advanced, high school level, mathematics assessments to such students in high school, consistent with the State's mathematics content standards, and use the results in high school accountability determinations.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #14, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request how it will ensure that every student in the State has the opportunity to be prepared for and take courses at an advanced level prior to high school.

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ASSURANCES

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

☒ 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of ESEA flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.

☒ 2. It has adopted English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

☒ 3. It will administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

☒ 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii) no later than the 2015–2016 school year. (Principle 1)

☒ 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)

☒ 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)

☒ 7. It will annually make public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools prior to the start of the school year as well as publicly recognize its reward schools, and will update its lists of priority and focus schools at least every three years. (Principle 2)

If the SEA is not submitting with its renewal request its updated list of priority and focus schools, based on the most recent available data, for implementation beginning in the 2015–2016 school year, it must also assure that:

☐ 8. It will provide to the Department, no later than January 31, 2016, an updated list of priority and focus schools, identified based on school year 2014–2015 data, for implementation beginning in the 2016–2017 school year.

☒ 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)

☒ 10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its ESEA flexibility request.

☒ 11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. (Attachment 2)

☒ 12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the SEA customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice. (Attachment 3)

☒ 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout its ESEA flexibility request, and will ensure that all such reports, data, and evidence are accurate, reliable, and complete or, if it is aware of issues related to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of its reports, data, or evidence, it will disclose those issues.

☒ 14. It will report annually on its State report card and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the "all students" group, each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), and for any combined subgroup (as applicable): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State's annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. In addition, it will annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively. It will ensure that all reporting is consistent with *State and Local Report Cards Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended Non-Regulatory Guidance* (February 8, 2013).

Principle 3 Assurances

Each SEA must select the appropriate option and, in doing so, assures that:

Option A	Option B	Option C
☐ 15.a. The SEA is on track to fully implementing Principle 3, including incorporation of student growth based on State assessments into educator ratings for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals.	If an SEA that is administering new State assessments during the 2014–2015 school year is requesting one additional year to incorporate student growth based on these assessments, it will: ☒ 15.b.i. Continue to ensure that its LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation systems using multiple measures, and that the SEA or its LEAs will calculate student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals; and ☒ 15.b.ii. Ensure that each teacher of a tested grade and subject and all principals will receive their student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year.	If the SEA is requesting modifications to its teacher and principal evaluation and support system guidelines or implementation timeline other than those described in Option B, which require additional flexibility from the guidance in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility* as well as the documents related to the additional flexibility offered by the Assistant Secretary in a letter dated August 2, 2013, it will: ☐ 15.c. Provide a narrative response in its redlined ESEA flexibility request as described in Section II of the ESEA flexibility renewal guidance.

CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State's Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.

In recent years, the District of Columbia has been hailed as a leader in many areas of school reform, including educator recruitment, retention, evaluation, and training; robust charter school options, innovation, and collaboration; and universal preschool. This strong reform agenda is backed by aligned leadership and support at all levels; as a result, the District of Columbia has both the experience and the political will to achieve exceptional outcomes.

The list of factors that position the District of Columbia for success is extensive and includes a vibrant charter school sector that currently educates 44 percent of publicly educated pupils, a head start on transforming the traditional school system under mayoral control, improved state-level capacity, a supportive network of leading local and national partners, and District-wide interest and urgency around the work that remains to be done.

While the District of Columbia has made much progress, significant challenges remain. Despite the renewed focus on raising achievement, many schools and students still struggle academically. Statewide, only 50 percent of students are proficient in English Language Arts (ELA) and 55 percent are proficient in mathematics, with stubbornly persistent performance gaps between subgroups. For students with special needs, only 20 percent are meeting proficiency in ELA and 25 percent in mathematics. English Language Learners (ELLs) perform slightly better, with 37 percent meeting proficiency levels in ELA and 49 percent in mathematics. With the District of Columbia's 2011 proficiency targets set between 70 and 74 percent, only 8 of 183 schools met adequate yearly progress (AYP) benchmarks in both ELA and mathematics last year, many because of the "safe harbor" provision that gives credit to schools that are able to reduce by 10 percent the number of students not meeting proficiency targets. Based on the graduation cohort calculation, the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) identified a graduation rate of 61 percent of students graduating within four years.

Background

In addressing these challenges, it helps to understand the District of Columbia's unique context. Its 68 square miles of land, divided into eight wards, contain 61 local education agencies (LEAs): one large, traditional district, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), and 60 independently operated charter LEAs. Together, these 61 school districts educate 82,958 students mostly from low-income families of color. In 2011, the District of Columbia led the nation in post-secondary participation, with 71 percent of 17- to 24-year-old young adults

either residing in or relocating to the District having a college degree or enrolled in a post-secondary institution. Yet, many are not graduates of the District of Columbia's elementary and secondary education sector; instead, they are transplants to the metro area. Furthermore, the District of Columbia has a stratified education gap among residents wherein income and educational attainment differ between the upper Northwest and most of the city east of Rock Creek Park.

For decades, DCPS served as both the state education agency (SEA) and an LEA. In 2007, after Congress amended the District of Columbia Home Rule specifically to permit mayoral takeover of public education, the Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA) was enacted and created the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to oversee the Federally prescribed state-level education functions of the jurisdiction, including accountability and support for all LEAs in the District. The same law established an independent State Board of Education (SBOE), with advisory, approval, and public engagement mandates. As OSSE continues to provide statewide leadership and support, it is committed to ensuring that all students in the nation's capital are fully prepared for careers, college, and life
In 2012, the District of Columbia pursued the ESEA flexibility waiver to revise a prescriptive formula for measuring performance and develop a new measurement to inform improvement efforts in a meaningful way; to boost proficiency, narrow, and close achievement gaps; to reward successful schools; and to support LEAs and schools to enable sustainable improvement. The waiver approval allowed OSSE to develop differentiated rewards, interventions, and supports and now provides education stakeholders with greater information on the state of schools in the District of Columbia.

Pursuing continued ESEA flexibility is the right approach for improving education in the District of Columbia. This proposal seeks to build upon lessons learned and accelerate outcomes, with the ultimate goal of increasing the number of students who are ready for college, careers, and life. At a minimum, OSSE expects its students to reach proficiency at a rate of 73 percent in ELA and 74 percent in mathematics by 2017. Likewise, OSSE expects the graduation rate to increase to 78 percent for students graduating within four years and to 90 percent for students graduating within six years by 2017.

Meaningful Community Engagement
Developing a high-quality, comprehensive ESEA flexibility waiver renewal application and ensuring its successful implementation necessitated a comprehensive public engagement campaign to solicit community and stakeholder input. In 2012, OSSE conducted extensive outreach for several months to meaningfully engage a critical and diverse group of education stakeholders. They ranged from classroom and special education teachers to parents, students, youth leaders, administrators, community-based organizations, education advocates, political and business leaders, English Language Learners (ELLs), early childhood educators, among other stakeholders. In addition to hosting focus groups, OSSE worked in partnership with the State Board of Education (SBOE) to hold dozens of community meetings throughout the District of Columbia's eight wards.

Similarly, with the 2015 ESEA flexibility waiver renewal process, the outreach strategies were designed to ensure broad participation from residents in all eight wards in the District of Columbia in the process. To achieve that, much like the 2012 engagement, OSSE engaged a diverse group of education stakeholders at several community, focus groups, and youth meetings throughout the District of Columbia. As discussed further below, a number of those community meetings were hosted with SBOE and involved education stakeholders that were both new to the ESEA flexibility waiver or had participated in the first waiver application in 2012.

Furthermore, OSSE held webinars and hosted topic-specific focus groups to solicit explicit feedback from education clients, such as teachers, administrators, students, youth leaders, and parents. Throughout the process, stakeholders had access to multiple ways to convey comments or concerns, whether electronically, by mail, or in-person at community forums and at SBOE public meetings, which are televised and rebroadcast throughout the month. These opportunities generated a significant amount of public comments and input that have informed and strengthened this ESEA flexibility request.

As shown below in Table 1, the outreach plan centered on a commitment to keeping the District of Columbia's public education community informed of, and involved in, the consideration and development of the ESEA flexibility renewal request. The community engagement process ensured that the appropriate education entities and the flexibility waiver addressed the needs and concerns of the District's stakeholders.

Table 1. Consultation and Multiple Means of Engagement

Public Meetings	Online Engagement	Working Groups	In-Person Overviews
Meetings at OSSE to provide an overview of the waiver application process and key components	Waiver application published for 30 day public comment period	Working groups on core issues	Waiver walk-throughs with OSSE staff offered to all LEAs and various organizations
Meetings in the community in partnership with theState Board of Education	Webinars offered as an additional option to meetings (ESEA Waiver, Equitable Access and SSIP)		Focus groups with teachers and principals
Live website provides information on all meetings, including materials and feedback			

In addition, the realignment efforts within OSSE have better equipped the agency to implement

cross-functional strategies and supports that leverage agency knowledge and expertise. Cross-functional efforts ensure that there is elimination of duplicate efforts and that every opportunity to engage education stakeholders is utilized. By leveraging existing opportunities to interact with various stakeholders, more stakeholders have the opportunity engage in meaningful dialogue with OSSE regarding the ESEA flexibility waiver application without increasing scheduling burdens. A parallel goal of OSSE's outreach and consultation efforts was to further create and fortify partnerships with individuals and groups who will implement, support, develop, or are affected by the educational strategies identified in this application.

OSSE's extensive stakeholder engagement not only helped shape the draft renewal application made available for public comment, but it also resulted in several changes to the final application for submission. Early group discussions provided information about commonly held concerns and perceptions which informed the draft posted for public comment, and continued engagement throughout the public comment period helped to identify specific strategies proposed in the draft that demanded greater detail and clarity. In developing the final application, OSSE staff drew on all input to ensure that the District of Columbia's education plan fully considered input received throughout the process.

Engagement with Teachers, Principals, and Union Leaders

As stated above, the District of Columbia operates in an education landscape that includes one large traditional LEA – DCPS, as well as a charter authorizer, the Public Charter School Board (PCSB), and multiple public charter LEAs responsible for the oversight of teachers and school administrators. To ensure that District of Columbia public school teachers and their representatives were partners in the development of the ESEA flexibility renewal request, OSSE facilitated open forums, extended office hours, and online opportunities for teachers to participate in the development of the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal request.

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

In addition to inviting public comment via the state education agency's website, webinars, and at community meetings, OSSE ensured that select stakeholders affected by the District of Columbia's education program had opportunities to participate in smaller focus groups to discuss their unique needs and perspectives. OSSE worked to identify and leverage existing opportunities to obtain input, including consulting with existing education advisory groups. Participants included experts and/or advocates representing specific wards (geographical regions) and groups, including homeless families, charter schools, disengaged students, youth leadership, faith and community-based organizations, parents, students, teachers, LEA administrators, institutes of higher learning, special education experts, local businesses, community liaisons, private schools, and elected representatives.

Initial efforts to seek input for the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal application began with a District-wide kick-off meeting before utilizing stakeholder-specific forums and media to ensure maximum outreach and stakeholder participation. To eliminate geographical, economic, or temporal barriers to participation, focus groups and forums were held in a variety of settings across the District of Columbia, including Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, Parent Night events at schools, and in neighborhood association meetings. This community-based approach resulted in transparent public forums in local settings that captured the ideas and concerns of the hundreds of stakeholders who otherwise might not have had an opportunity to participate. The District of Columbia ensured that all stakeholders had the opportunity to participate in the community meetings and provide relevant feedback in some manner.

The strategy of holding focus groups representing unique stakeholder communities produced critical feedback. Participants received an overview of the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal option and were advised that focus group results would be used to inform the application process. To facilitate and guide discussion, OSSE facilitators asked open-ended questions that became increasingly specific. Participants were encouraged to share opinions, concerns, priorities, and perspectives relevant to the group and to the four principles of the ESEA flexibility. Discussions addressed how proposed reforms will change the future of public education in the District of Columbia and the role of stakeholders in the education process. Finally, participants were encouraged to provide further input via e-mail, phone, or in person.

Information regarding the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal application was also made available to the public through a number of media outlets, including OSSE's website, press releases, Facebook and other social networking sites, e-mail blasts, and extended open house and office hours. Stakeholders participated by phone, through written or electronic mail, by webinar, by teleconference, and/or during in-person meetings. More than 45 meetings, webinars, and focus groups were held with stakeholders to discuss reforms related to the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal request. An open comment period on the resulting draft renewal application began on February 12, 2015 and lasted until March 13, 2015. In addition, OSSE provided further transparency by briefing SBOE and the public at SBOE's televised monthly public meetings on both the initial draft renewal proposal, revisions suggested from public feedback sessions, as well as a final proposal with public feedback incorporated into various sections.

In the course of developing this application, OSSE worked collaboratively with elected bodies, including the State Board of Education, Parent Teacher Associations, LEAs, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, and community education advocacy groups to solicit and encourage their input. Efforts to engage stakeholders and garner robust discussion regarding the proposed plan continued throughout the drafting process. Attachment R-1 is a list of the stakeholders that engaged in these conversations and the events preceding the renewal application. Summary of the critical feedback received from District of Columbia education stakeholders are described below:

Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready.

Stakeholders supported 'Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students' and emphasized the need to ensure students are college- and career-ready. A number of parents view the next generation assessments as a means of achieving the goal of college- and career readiness for students; particularly since the assessments are aligned with the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards, which are centered on college- and career readiness. However, many stakeholders expressed concerns about the "high stakes" associated with a new assessment that students and teachers will be undertaking for the first time, and the potential impact on students' proficiency rates, teacher evaluations, effects on instructional pace, and school classifications. To address this concern, OSSE has elected to pause schools classification for school year (SY) 2014-15 and to avoid making high stakes decisions with the first administration of the new assessments.

Furthermore, parents and teachers expressed concerns about the amount of testing that students undergo throughout the year, and the loss of instruction time because of an over-emphasis in testing. OSSE will work with LEAs, teachers, and the community to think about ways to ease the amount of testing in District of Columbia schools.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support.
Throughout community and focus group discussions, there was a clear and emphasized need, in the current accountability system, to incorporate additional measures that would provide an accurate representation of the quality of educational services provided at a school. Some participants believe that the current emphasis on standardized test results may not be enough to accurately identify success and diagnose challenges. In addition, stakeholders expressed an interest in seeing the use of student growth data broadened to capture relevant non-cognitive skills that impact student achievement. Stakeholders were pleased with the new format and display of the accountability measures in the State and LEA Report Cards that are housed on LearnDC.org. They found the new format to be more accessible, providing parents, students, and other stakeholders with transparent, meaningful, and comparable data for all LEAs. Moreover, they were pleased to learn of OSSE's realignment of divisions to implement cross-functional strategies to better support LEAs, schools, and teachers, which also addressed prior concerns related to *'Principle 4: Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden.*

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership.
Stakeholders including principals, teachers, parents, students, and education advocates spent significant time discussing the 'State Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators.' They agreed that increasing supports must be given to teachers regardless of whether they are in their level of experience. It was also the general consensus that special attention must be given to the unique needs of high poverty urban schools and the skills teachers need to succeed in these environments. Additionally, the alignment of teacher preparatory programs with the realities presented in teaching at a high-need school was also highlighted. Since there are a number of substantive comments on the matter, OSSE looks forward to gleaning more feedback from principals, teachers, parents, students, and other interested parties on this issue through additional focus groups and meetings on the 'State Plan for Equitable Access to

Effective Educators.

Summary

Efforts to develop a high-quality and comprehensive ESEA flexibility waiver renewal request and to ensure successful implementation once approved by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) necessitated an ambitious community and stakeholder engagement strategy. Outreach efforts led to spirited and meaningful discussions regarding all four principles. In developing the final application, OSSE staff incorporated the feedback from stakeholders to ensure that that the District of Columbia's education plan as articulated in this application included strategies to address the challenges identified by a wide array of stakeholders across the District. The final application was crafted with an eye toward building upon lessons learned from the first flexibility waiver implementation and incorporating community input to strengthen the state school improvement work and to improve student achievement, increase graduation rates, close achievement gaps, support effective instruction and leadership, and develop globally competitive citizens who are prepared for success in college, careers, and life.

Continuing communication and collaboration with OSSE has been identified as a precursor to establishing trust and partnership with stakeholders, who care deeply about this work and are willing to work with OSSE and other education entities to provide quality education for all students and to create pathways for every student to succeed.

The District of Columbia's outreach efforts also reaffirmed and increased partnerships that will be nurtured beyond the submission of the ESEA flexibility renewal request. This is in keeping with OSSE's vision of an educational system that recognizes the vital role of parents, family, and community members as partners in achieving excellent outcomes for all students.

Through a successful renewal of the ESEA flexibility waiver, OSSE will build upon the progress made to date and continue to expand upon efforts to provide differentiated rewards, interventions, and supports by implementing a new accountability index that measures proficiency and growth and assists LEAs in supporting great teachers and leaders. Moreover, the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal represents a fresh opportunity for parents, family, students, teachers, schools, OSSE, LEAs, community and business groups, elected officials, and other key District of Columbia stakeholders to work collaboratively to build on what is working and at the same time accelerate the District's efforts to address existing barriers to success for its residents.

EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an

interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

X Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

Overview of SEA's Request for the ESEA Flexibility

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA's request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA's comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA's strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and

2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA's and its LEAs' ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

In 2001, the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was a watershed moment for education in the United States. For the first time, SEAs were required to develop standards and assessments to measure student proficiency, enforce a system of accountability for schools, measure performance based on subgroups of students, identify underperforming schools, and implement prescribed interventions in those underperforming schools.

While the core tenets of NCLB are still relevant and important, the "one size fits all" approach did not effectively meet the needs of students in such a diverse and complex educational landscape as is found in the District. To meet the law's key requirement of having all students proficient in English/Language Arts and mathematics by 2014, OSSE set proficiency targets between 70 percent and 74 percent in 2011. Only 8 of 183 schools met AYP benchmarks in both English/Language Arts and math. Current NCLB accountability requirements do not account for schools making great strides in student growth "below the bar" or for demonstrating progress in other indicators that measure college- and career-readiness—and that admissions officers and employers value. Moreover, the prescribed interventions have not resulted in significant improvement in student outcomes.

OSSE respects and supports the original intent of the federal law and wants to build upon it so that OSSE can more effectively measure school success. As with NCLB, OSSE expects 100 percent of its students will reach proficiency when measured against the CCSS. In the proposed new accountability system, in the proposed accountability system, OSSE now also expects that 100 percent of the District of Columbia's schools will show growth each year.

The OSSE Approach

OSSE believes that students come first, and what matters most is what happens in the classroom. OSSE also believes that the teachers and school leaders are best qualified to affect student learning. By removing barriers to education and providing the necessary support to maximize student learning, school leaders and teachers, who are best qualified to provide solutions, can improve student outcomes. That is the fundamental premise behind this proposed action plan.

Continued flexibility from certain provisions of the ESEA will revitalize the accountability system established by NCLB and set higher standards and expectations for teaching and learning. The improved accountability system is based on a system of classification that will allow OSSE, LEAs, and other education partners to target rewards and support based on academic achievement and needs. This improved accountability system will maintain a focus on creating incentives for continuous and sustainable improvement and supporting LEAs and schools that need assistance. LEAs and schools have the flexibility to use federal funds to tailor programs and interventions, thus ensuring greater success in teacher and leader effectiveness and student outcomes.

Recent Accomplishments

Over the last four years, OSSE has continued to demonstrate improvements in education and compliance with federal requirements. In several education areas, OSSE has become a national leader in education in comparison with other states and urban centers. The District of Columbia still leads all other states in pre-kindergarten free and universal access to early childhood education, starting at age three, and leads in pre-kindergarten enrollment.
The District of Columbia continues to be a leader in providing school breakfast to children from low-income areas after increasing school breakfast participation for District public and charter school students by 35 percent in SY 2010- 11 and allowing Washington DC's national ranking to jump from 20th to 1st in one year.

As noted in its initial application, OSSE was the second SEA in the nation to align its English language arts (ELA) state assessments to college- and career-ready standards in 2011, continuing alignment efforts to complete the mathematics alignment in 2013. This enabled LEAs and schools to tailor instruction and supports using student assessment results aligned to the CCSS.

Based on these continued improvements, OSSE successfully exited federal High-Risk status in 2014.

Finally, OSSE has continued to make significant improvements in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). While the District has historically been characterized by noncompliance with IDEA, since the creation of OSSE, the District has demonstrated accelerated improvement in key areas of IDEA performance. In 2011, OSSE was released from the Blackman portion of the long-standing Blackman Jones Consent Decree as a result of establishing a high-functioning State Hearing Office and meeting the numerical

benchmark of 90 percent timely issuance of hearing officer determinations over 12 months. In 2013, the District was released from *Petties vs. DC* after meeting requirements related to special education transportation and nonpublic tuition payments. In 2014, the District was released from the *Jones* portion of the Consent Decree after demonstrating compliance with requirements over 12 months. In addition, OSSE has continued to make significant gains on key IDEA compliance indicators, resulting in a determination by the USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to remove two special conditions from the District's FFY 2014 grant award for the first time in the District's history.

These results are the product of OSSE's efforts to implement a robust special education monitoring framework, create key IDEA policies and guidance, develop accurate special education data systems, and provide ongoing training and technical assistance to improve practice and outcomes for students with disabilities.

The District of Columbia's Future Work

The educational landscape of the District of Columbia is unique. Its size, education governance, and reform structures enable aggressive improvement efforts that are able to reach individual schools, classrooms, and students with great speed and impact. 82,958 students attend 217 schools.

The implementation and sustainability of the principles required in the ESEA flexibility request continue to build upon key efforts underway as part of RTTT that have been expanded upon during the past several years of Waiver implementation.

Pursuing ESEA flexibility is the right approach for education in the District of Columbia. Flexibility will provide the opportunity to increase proficiency, close achievement gaps, reward schools, and support LEAs and schools to assure continuous, sustainable improvement and improved student outcomes. The request for flexibility in certain ESEA provisions will free up both time and money so that school communities can focus on their unique needs, continue to improve program quality, and provide accurate information to help parents make school choices best suited to their children's needs.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

Option A	**Option B**
☒ The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading /language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards. i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)	☐ The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards. i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4) ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the post-secondary level. (Attachment 5)

1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA's plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

In 2010, The DC State Board of Education adopted the CCSS. OSSE had subsequently aligned statewide assessments, and offered high quality professional development to assist in the transition of college- and career-ready standards in classroom instruction. These efforts placed OSSE in a unique position to use the CCSS to ensure educational rigor and accountability in the District of Columbia, for both traditional public schools and public

charter schools. OSSE has developed a distinct model of school accountability that introduces rigorous CCSS-aligned assessments into an environment driven by school choice and LEA autonomy.

The District of Columbia's ultimate goal for the adoption of the CCSS and CCSS-aligned assessments was a District-wide understanding of the standards on a level that benefits all learners by preparing them to succeed in college and careers. This aligns with OSSE's belief that students come first and what matters most is what is happening in the classroom. OSSE has the great opportunity to have a positive, direct impact on educators through state-level support and professional development. Also, the District of Columbia's size allows it to comprehensively implement the standards sooner than most states and fully align statewide assessments to the CCSS.

By removing barriers and providing the necessary supports to teachers, including holding information and professional development sessions for instructional coaches and principals, students began receiving instruction aligned to the CCSS at the beginning of SY 2011–12. At this point, OSSE has adopted David Conley's definition of college- and career-readiness : the content knowledge, skills and habits a student needs in order to enroll and succeed—without remediation—in credit bearing courses at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree or transfer to a baccalaureate program, or in a high-quality certificate program that enables students to enter a career pathway with potential future advancement."

Public engagement has been a crucial part of the entire CCSS adoption process. DC education stakeholders, including local educators and national experts, were invited to provide feedback from the very beginning to review the standards and provide OSSE with guidance on adoption. The DC State Board of Education held numerous public meetings and several members attended Gates Foundation-sponsored CCSS study sessions with their National Association of State Boards of Education peers. LEA and school leaders were consulted on the implementation plan and transition to CCSS-aligned assessments. At each decision point throughout the process, OSSE turned to the District of Columbia's education community for input and guidance.

OSSE's vision is to ensure that all students graduate college- and career-ready. The CCSS focuses the District's efforts to realize that vision by better preparing all students to participate fully in today's global, information age economy.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to analyze the extent of alignment between the State's current content standards and the college- and career-ready standards to determine similarities and differences between those two sets of standards? If so, will the results be used to inform the transition to college- and career-ready standards?*

OSSE began the analysis of alignment in 2009, the State Board of Education adopted college- and career-ready CCSS in 2010, and OSSE is now focused on ensuring effective transition of

the CCSS into classroom instruction.

College and Career Ready Standards Adoption Process

Directly after the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers released the draft of college- and career-readiness standards on September 21, 2009, the District of Columbia proactively began the process of adopting the CCSS. Communication with stakeholders began immediately.

On October 1, 2009, OSSE released a memo inviting public comment on both the ELA and mathematics standards. Two public surveys were designed and made available to stakeholders via the Internet, with a request for feedback by October 15, 2009. A joint public hearing of the DC State Board of Education and OSSE was held on October 7, 2009 to elicit public comment from the community.

Soon after the initial period for public comment, a joint letter was issued from then State Superintendent Kerri Briggs and then State Board of Education President Lisa Raymond to Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on October 21, 2009, indicating the continued support of both OSSE and the State Board of Education for the common standards.

Once the newly drafted standards for kindergarten through grade 12 were made available to SEAs in March 2010, OSSE staff created a comprehensive crosswalk of the District of Columbia's existing content standards with the proposed draft standards. The crosswalk compared the alignment of the CCSS with the District of Columbia's current standards to identify content gaps. OSSE staff brought in over 50 stakeholders to review the crosswalk and collect feedback. The stakeholders included school leaders, instructional coaches, educators (including science and social studies teachers), parents, members of the business community, higher education faculty, and elected officials. Several public meetings were held to discuss the new standards, the changes those standards would bring, and to gather feedback on whether the new standards should be adopted.

The combined feedback was used to propose the adoption of the CCSS to the State Board of Education, which it approved on July 21, 2010. The adoption of the CCSS laid the foundation for the adoption of English language development standards and early learning standards—both aligned to the CCSS-- in 2013. Likewise in December 2013, the DC State Board of Education adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which identifies the core content knowledge and set of skills that students should know and be able to do incorporating scientific and engineering principles.

College and Career Ready Standards Implementation Plan

Since June 2011, support has been provided to educators and administrators through statewide professional development with a goal to assist them in moving to the CCSS. At the same time, OSSE has been conducting outreach to various stakeholders to solicit input on

the process as well as the goals. Between the summer and the fall of last year, a number of activities have taken place, including the release of a blueprint that reinforces where District of Columbia's standards are strong and where new standards will strengthen the system and the administration of a survey identifying students' and educators' needs in terms of support and professional development.

Beginning with the 2012 state assessment system in English/Language Arts (ELA) and composition, the DC CAS has been aligned to the CCSS. The mathematics assessment was aligned to the CCSS in SY 2012-13 . Prior to the full implementation of the CCSS, mathematics instruction focused on priority standards—the former District of Columbia mathematics standards that would most prepare students to be successful in the CCSS. These standards were identified in consultation with Student Achievement Partners and were provided via the 2012 DC CAS mathematics blueprint published in June 2011. In conjunction with the priority standards, teachers were encouraged to incorporate the Standards for Mathematical Practice into instruction. These practices were also included on the 2012 DC CAS blueprint. Currently, mathematics instruction is fully aligned with CCSS and will be assessed by the PARCC assessment. Consistent with the assessment transition of CCSS, DC will also transition to an NGSS-aligned assessment in Spring 2015 and will continue to provide technical assistance to LEAs around this transition.

Transitioning to CCSS has been a multi-year approach, as illustrated by a list of key milestones and the corresponding goals OSSE set forth to achieve.

- **June 2011—Statewide CCSS Professional Development**: Supported educators with instructional shifts required by the CCSS.
- **Starting in June 2011—Community Outreach**: Involved all stakeholders to have a voice and mutually benefit from the District of Columbia's goal and vision.
- **June 2011—DC CAS Aligned to Common Core—Blueprint Released:** Clarified the District of Columbia's standards and supported transition to new standards.
- **July 2011—Crosswalk English/Language Arts Standards to Special Education (SPED) Entry Points**: Assisted SPED educators with transition and alignment of the District of Columbia's standards to the CCSS.
- **August 2011—Established PARCC Educator Leader Cadre:** PARCC ELC, which was formerly known as the Common Core Task Force, was established as a stakeholder group of educators, school leaders, and community members that would aid in the implementation of CCSS as well as serve as "in the field" ambassadors for the PARCC assessment.
- **August 2011—Conducted Professional Development Needs Survey**: Identified and documented student and educator needs.
- **August 2011—Distributed Printed CCSS in Mathematics and ELA**: Increased awareness of the CCSS to all stakeholders.
- **November 2011—Developed New Composition Prompts Aligned to the CCSS and Offer Professional Development on the Transition**: Aligned writing assessment to the CCSS and

supported educators in transition to expectations of the CCSS.

- **February 2012—Reviewed Graduation Requirements for Math**: Ensured the District of Columbia's students are prepared for college and careers.
- **May 2012—Created State Team to Review Draft of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)**: Assessed current status of science to be able to provide educators with the best support to improve student learning.
- **June 2012—Distribute PARCC/SBAC Technology Survey**: Assessed technology resources in preparation for PARCC assessment.
- **July 2012—Analyzed Composition Data and Provide Additional Professional Development**: Educators will be better prepared to teach writing; students will be prepared to meet college- and career-ready writing demands.
- **July 2012—Analyzed Science Data**: Informed blueprint decisions and message to stakeholders.
- **July–August 2012— Launched CCSS Interactive Website**: Created a forum for District of Columbia-based Community of Learning around "real world" CCSS implementation.
- **July–August 2012—Conducted CCSS Assessment Item Development**: Integrated core knowledge of the CCSS into DC CAS assessments.
- **July–August 2012—Common Core Parent Institute**: Increased awareness of the CCSS and alignment with home and school expectations.
- **July–August 2012—Summer Workshop for 21st Century Parents and After-School Providers**: Increased awareness of the CCSS and alignment with home, after-school, and school expectations.
- **October 2012—Aligned Special Education Data System (SEDS) to the CCSS**: Supported SPED educators and ensured individualized education plan (IEP) goals are aligned with the CCSS.
- **June 2013—Included DC CAS composition in Accountability Plan**: By including composition, the District of Columbia signaled CCSS driven instructional shifts in writing, thereby encouraging high-caliber writing instruction.
- **December 2013**—DC State Board of Education Adopted the Next Generation Science Standards.
- **Starting in January 2014**—With the adoption of NGSS, science PD launches in January 2014. Comprehensive summer training in 2014.
- **June 2014—Launched Science Educator Leader Cadre:** Master teachers throughout the District of Columbia were selected to serve as NGSS ambassadors.
- **July 2014 – Hosted NGSS Environmental Literacy Summer Institute**
- **July – August 2014- Conducted CCSS Deconstruction Cooperative**: Partners with educators across the District to deconstruct CCSS in reading and mathematics
- **November 2014- Hosted first of three foundational LEA Institutes: "It Takes A City: Bridging LEAs to Resources for Enhanced Student Outcomes!"** City-wide institute focused on providing LEAs with information, resources, and professional development opportunities
- **January 2015—NGSS Professional Development Series Launch:** began a series to assist

with NGSS readiness for educators, school leaders, and community partners.

- **January 2015-- Preparing for Assessments with Strengthened Supports (P.A.S.S.) Professional Development Series**: launched with a focus on Math, ELA, English Language Learners, Writing, and Test Prep Tips that helped prepare educators, school, and community partners for the PARCC assessment.
- **January 2015—"It Takes a City to Knock it Out of the PARCC!" LEA Institute II:** This second LEA Institute was a training opportunity to prepare educators, administrators, and school leaders for the PARCC assessment.

May 2015—"**It Takes a City: DC Does it Best!" LEA Institute III:** The final LEA Institute will showcase local and national best practices and provide educators in the District continued opportunities for professional learning and application.

Timeline for Implementation

After the adoption of college- and career-ready standards, OSSE collaborated with all LEAs to move toward implementation. In a joint decision by the DCPS and other charter LEAs, it was decided that the District of Columbia would target an aggressive implementation timeline, starting with SY 2011–12. Beginning in SY 2011–12, instruction focused on the CCSS for all students, particularly for ELLs and students with disabilities in ELA and mathematics in grades K through 2. For grades 3 through 12, ELA instruction focused on the CCSS with a transition to informational text and writing to a text.

Similarly, the state developed an aggressive timeline for the implementation of the NGSS. The District's aggressive timeline for implementation has been critical to student success in the District of Columbia because it is preparing teachers for helping students acquire the skills and knowledge required by the College and Career Ready Standards. It is also laid the foundation for success on the NGSS assessments, which will be administered beginning Spring 2015.

The timeline for DC assessment **alignment to the College and Career Ready Standards** appears in Table 1.B.i.

Table 1.B.i. Timeline for DC Assessment Alignment to the College and Career Ready Standards

School Years	Instruction	Assessment
2011–12	K–12 Mathematics(aligned to the CCSS) K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics(DC Priority Standards)	DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10—Priority Standards Composition: 4, 7, 10 *Optional Grades 2and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2012–13	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS)	DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10

		Composition: 4, 7, 10 *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2013–14	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS)	DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10 Composition: 4, 7, 10 *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2014–15	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS) K-12 Science (aligned to the NGSS)	Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) Assessment: ELA/ Literacy: 3-8 and High School ELA/Literacy II, with all other high school PARCC assessments available, but optional. Math: 3-8 and Geometry or Integrated Math II, with all other high school PARCC assessments available, but optional. DC NGSS aligned assessments in grades 5, 8 and high school biology

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA propose to develop and disseminate high-quality instructional materials aligned with the new standards? If so, are the instructional materials designed (or will they be designed) to support the teaching and learning of all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students?*

OSSE actively began developing and disseminating high-quality instructional materials aligned to the CCSS through its RTTT grant, and these efforts have been sustained. Each LEA develops its own curriculum, with support and evaluation by OSSE by request. This is primarily because the District's charter law (SRA) grants charter schools exclusive control over their instructional methods. However, since September 2011, OSSE has provided professional development and exemplar lessons as resources to inform curriculum development at the LEA level.

Additional information on effective teaching and learning, along with high quality instructional materials, has been made available as part of the Professional Learning Communities of Effectiveness (PLaCEs) grant through RTTT, which provided funds to LEAs on a competitive basis to develop exemplar lessons aligned to the CCSS. The Transforming Instruction through Lesson Study (TITLeS) project provided teachers with the opportunity to work with their peers across the District to develop expertise in delivering exceptional lessons based on the CCSS. This professional learning communities created an online library

of 50 CCSS video lessons per grade in both mathematics and English/Language Arts for grades 3 through 9 to support every teacher in the adoption of the CCSS, regardless of participation in RTTT. Additionally, OSSE will look to curate exemplar lessons already developed and used by other states and make those available on LearnDC, a one-stop-shop web portal for educators, school leaders, and the public to gain tools and resources about school performance, the CCSS, and licensed early learning programs. OSSE is developing complementary programming and materials that will further aid educators in implementing the Next Generation Science Standards.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to conduct outreach on and dissemination of the college- and career-ready standards? If so, does the SEA's plan reach the appropriate stakeholders, including educators, administrators, families, and IHEs? Is it likely that the plan will result in all stakeholders increasing their awareness of the State's college- and career-ready standards?*

OSSE has and continues to conduct outreach and dissemination of the CCSS to reach various stakeholders and increase awareness of the college and career ready standards.

Outreach and Dissemination

Outreach to stakeholders was the first action step in the implementation process. Because the District of Columbia has varying governing structures, OSSE knew that for implementation to be successful, its outreach had to be wide and deep and that much guidance and direction would be needed. OSSE continues to leverage all key partnerships to be sure stakeholders, especially parents and teachers, have a full understanding of the shifts to the CCSS and NGSS so that students will learn the necessary skills.

As a governing state of PARCC, the District of Columbia continues to take a lead role in providing the necessary guidance and direction to assist LEAs in preparing students for success in college and in the workforce. Additionally, OSSE's continuing partnerships with the University of the District of Columbia, PARCC, Inc., the American Diploma Project (ADP), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) provide guidance and information to support this transition to the College and Career Ready standards and aligned next generation assessments.
In addition to these partnerships, OSSE accomplished the following core readiness and implementation activities:

- The original crosswalk of the District of Columbia's standards to the CCSS was posted on OSSE website for teachers to use in their instructional planning in 2011. OSSE then invited teachers to complete this work using the Achieve online tool and sent the analysis to a third party for the next iteration. The final version was reviewed and approved by selected teachers in the District of Columbia. This crosswalk was used to drive the blueprint for the 2012 DC CAS assessment.

- In June 2011, the 2012 DC CAS blueprint with the CCSS alignment was distributed to all LEAs and posted on OSSE website.

- In August 2011, each teacher for mathematics and/or ELA in the District of Columbia received a printed copy of the standards. These standards were sent to each school site where each building leader distributed them to educators.

- OSSE distributed printed PTA guides in English and Spanish to schools for each student to have a brochure introducing the CCSS to take home to parents. These were created for ELA and mathematics by grade and demonstrate to parents the importance of this shift and what they can expect in the classroom with the new standards.

- OSSE held meetings for LEA leaders and educators to explain the shift to the CCSS and its translation into instruction in the classroom. These meetings discussed the changes to the assessment, changes in instruction, and what these changes would look like in the classroom. Several leading subject matter experts spoke at these meetings, including David Coleman, one of the writers of the CCSS.

- Through RTTT, OSSE created a Common Core Task Force with members representing over 20 of 30 participating LEAs. This task force helped to drive decision making around the implementation plan and became the CCSS experts for their LEAs to deliver updates and information. This Task Force was also asked to create a statewide message around the CCSS and to identify the shifts in instruction. This team transitioned to what is now known as the PARCC Educator Leader Cadre, which currently focuses on creating instructional materials and resources that will continue to aid DC educators, administrators, and school leaders in transitioning to the PARCC assessment.

- OSSE created and maintains an interactive website, LearnDC.org, with professional development units, sample test items aligned to the CCSS, information about the PARCC assessment, curriculum guidance, sample lesson plans, exemplar teaching units, student work, and teacher-created videos. OSSE has actively maintained this site to ensure high-quality materials aligned to the standards are posted.

- OSSE sends out weekly newsletters to the LEA community and ensures that leaders and staff are kept abreast of core information related to resources, professional development opportunities, and invitations to provide input on the agency's core work...

- The District of Columbia held an instructional and curriculum summit for summer 2012 that further supported teachers in understanding the essential shifts in practice, curriculum, and assessment needed for full CCSS implementation. This summit brought together educators from all public schools to collaborate and share best practices for evaluating and developing curriculum and creating exemplar

materials. Additionally, in 2014 OSSE convened educators to deconstruct the CCSS and identified supporting principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) with the goal of continuing to support CCSS implementation and implement additional research-based instructional best practices.

- OSSE held a summer institute in 2014 for master science educators. These educators engaged in environmental science field experiences which supported teachers in understanding the essential shifts in practice, curriculum, and assessment needed for full NGSS implementation. OSSE has designed a professional learning series targeting NGSS implementation. These trainings are focused on standards deconstruction, exploring shifts in practice, and connecting to the Common Core.
- OSSE held a summer intensive institute in 2014 for teachers across all curricula that focused on developing standards-based learning goals for students. The training series supported the development of data driven instructional strategies through the Student Learning Objective (SLO) development process.

- OSSE collaborated with the University of the District of Columbia to examine the impact of the CCSS on K–12 instruction in preparation for PARCC , in addition to PARCC consortium level work with higher education institutions. The goal is that students who graduate from an LEA in the District of Columbia are college- and career-ready and will not be required to enroll in developmental or remedial courses.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to support students with disabilities in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?*

OSSE continues to consider the unique challenges that implementation of the CCSS presents to special populations of students. The CCSS are for all students and implementation requires making college- and career-ready standards and assessments accessible to all students. OSSE has ensured students with disabilities are able to fully participate in the PARCC assessment by supporting the development of accommodations and accessibility features (AAF). The technology-based platform of PARCC supports innovation in accommodations. OSSE has ensured that staff are fluent in the platform through ensuring participation in PARCC's AAF Operational Working Group. Additionally, as the universal design principles that guided the development of the PARCC assessment shifts many traditional "accommodations" for students with disabilities into "accessibility features" now available to all students, it is essential that staff can assist LEAs in understanding both the opportunities enabled by a transition to PARCC but also the potential confusion related to this change. OSSE staff have ensured that they are able to provide clear guidance to LEA staff so that DC educators are able to remain in compliance with federal requirements and fully customize the state testing environment to respond to student needs, which will support students with disabilities to demonstrate mastery of the CCSS.

To support students with disabilities, OSSE remains committed to high quality professional development of special and general education teachers. As part of OSSE's core professional development series, OSSE has engaged in a comprehensive professional development model to support access to the CCSS for students with disabilities and to ensure that instruction and assessment for this population is rigorous and relevant. Professional development work continues to include collaboration with nationally recognized experts on differentiation and curriculum mapping. In addition, OSSE used RTTT funds to conduct a special education quality review project, which has resulted in a self-assessment tool for schools and LEAs to use to assess their practices against key indicators of quality for special education practices and identify effective interventions to accelerate progress. In addition, OSSE updated its Special Education Data System (SEDS) to ensure that Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals are aligned with the CCSS and are standards driven.

At the operational level, OSSE continues to implement a number of key strategies to help LEAs ensure that students with disabilities are well positioned for a successful post-secondary transition to career and college. OSSE continues to conduct quarterly monitoring of secondary transition requirements as required by the ED's Office of Special Education Programs. OSSE's review of a sample of 100 IEPs for required secondary transition content is followed by LEA notification of the findings of each review via written reports. These reports provide written notification to LEAs to correct identified noncompliance as soon as possible and no later than one year from identification.

To further support teachers and leaders, OSSE provides comprehensive training programs and continuous support through its leadership of a State Secondary Transition Community of Practice (SSTCoP). OSSE initially implemented a cohort training model with a local institute of higher education, George Washington University, to provide turnkey training at a local high school through a series of sessions and workshops throughout the year. This work continues to be expanded each year. Under the leadership of the Division's Director of Teaching and Learning, the SSTCoP meets monthly to implement a state plan that ensures cross-system support for students with disabilities transitioning from high school into adulthood. In collaboration with the SSTCoP, OSSE has built a dedicated state secondary transition webpage (http://www.DC OSSEsecondarytransition.org/) for the District of Columbia where it publishes key information and tools for all education stakeholders, including parents and students.

OSSE continues to strengthen partnerships with the Department on Disability Services and in particular the Rehabilitative Services Administration as it implements its agreement on shared obligations related to supporting the successful transition of secondary students with disabilities.

In addition, OSSE's successful enhancement of the statewide special education data system, SEDS, in October 2011 included key updates to its secondary transition section. These

updates encourage best practices, improve compliance, and support better student outcomes.

In summer 2012, OSSE's Special Education Data System (SEDS) was again upgraded to align with the CCSS. SEDS contains a drop-down menu listing the CCSS to inform IEP writers. This functionality allows educators to use the database to track IDEA compliance, develop IEP goals aligned with the CCSS, and monitor student progress toward those goals. OSSE provides training and support to all LEAs throughout this process, with this system ready for SY 2012–13.

In Summer 2014, OSSE Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Division of Specialized Education combined to form one Division focused on the needs of all students enrolled in elementary and secondary education. OSSE believes that this realignment will he further accelerate reform efforts.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to analyze the factors that need to be addressed in preparing teachers of students with disabilities participating in a State's alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAAS) in order to ensure these students can participate in the assessments that will be aligned with college and career-ready standards?*

OSSE has and will continue to analyze the factors needing to be addressed to prepare teachers of students with disabilities participating in the alternate assessment with the goal of successfully preparing these students for participation in assessments aligned to the CCSS. Prior to DC's transition to the next generation assessments, students with disabilities eligible to take the DC CAS Alternate assessment (DC CAS Alt) – the up to one percent of students with significant cognitive disabilities –were assessed via an evidence-based portfolio assessment aligned to the CCSS. As the general education DC CAS shifted to the CCSS, the DC CAS Alt ensured that student entry points were aligned to the CCSS so that teachers could differentiate instruction according to an individual student's starting point, allowing students to set challenging but achievable academic goals. These entry points were used to guide the evidence-based portfolio assessment OSSE uses for these students.

To ensure that students in DC eligible for alternate assessment have access to a CCSS-aligned next generation assessment, OSSE joined the assessment consortium, National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) and is a member of the Workgroup One Community of Practice. The goal of NCSC is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve higher academic outcomes to prepare them for post-secondary options. OSSE believes these outcomes are achievable and is excited to be involved with this work. In 2014, DC participated in pilots one and two of the NCSC assessment, with 140 district students participating in the field test of items in pilot two. DC is one of 14 operational states for NCSC's first administration in Spring 2015.

For alternate assessments in science, DC will continue to use its alternate science assessment, DC Alt Science, which is a portfolio-based assessment administered to eligible students in grades 5, 8 and high school biology.

After New Century Learning Consortiums (NCLC) released the Learning Progressions, OSSE created crosswalks for both ELA and math. OSSE plans to create similar resources shortly for science. OSSE will work to adopt these progressions; it also plans to facilitate teacher and educator professional development that will show IEP teams how to link curriculum and intervention resources to ensure standards progression throughout the school year for all students. Additionally, through this consortium, OSSE is examining how the definition of college- and career-readiness applies to special-needs populations.

The District of Columbia convened Learning Progressions Community of Practice (LPCoP) consisting of approximately 20 individuals. They included general and special education teachers as well as technical assistance providers to ensure that curricular, instructional, and professional development modules developed by NCSC are practical and feasible. The LPCoP received training on the CCSS, the relationship between content and achievement standards, curriculum, assessment, and universal access to the general curriculum. The LPCoP implemented model curricula and help to refine and clarify materials and resources.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to analyze the linguistic demands of the State's college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of ELP standards corresponding to the college- and career-ready standards and to ensure that English Learners will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to inform revision of the ELP standards and support English Learners in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?*

OSSE has and will continue to analyze the linguistic demands of the CCSS to inform the development of English Language Proficiency standards, including the use of results to inform revisions and instruction so that English Learners can access the CCSS on the same schedule as all students.

To support instruction and assessment of ELLs, OSSE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to align the current language acquisition standards and assessment with the CCSS. OSSE convened a group of school leaders to discuss ESEA flexibility and provide input on the proposed application, AMOs, and interventions as well as how to best support dual-language programs. The District of Columbia also participates in the Assessment Services Supporting ELLs through Technology System (ASSETS) consortium, a four-year project launched in 2012 to build a comprehensive and balanced technology-based assessment system for ELLs. The assessment system will be anchored in WIDA's English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards, which are aligned with the CCSS, informed by current and ongoing research, and supported by comprehensive professional development. The assessment is on track to replace ACCESS in 2016.

The system includes a computer-based language proficiency test, screener, benchmark assessment, and formative resources to support teachers in implementing data-driven instruction for ELLs. The consortium builds on the foundation of standards, assessment, professional development, and research already developed by the managing partner, WIDA, to ensure that tools help ELLs succeed in becoming college- and career-ready. The consortium also assists in the development of online summative, benchmark, and screener assessments in addition to formative assessment resources for use in the classroom.
For English as a Second Language teachers to transition successfully into teaching the CCSS, they must understand the correlation between academic standards and English language development (ELD) standards. The District of Columbia teachers are currently using the 2012 Edition of the WIDA ELD standards, which is heavily influenced by the CCSS. Being a part of the WIDA Consortium gives teachers access to these new ELD standards, resource guides, online training, and support in synchronizing developing students' English language skills with their academic achievement.

In SY 2013-14, two out of 12 Title IIIA LEAs met their Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). This is higher level of AMAO achievement than we have seen in the past five years. OSSE will look to build upon these efforts and successes to continue the growth in ELL performance. The District of Columbia will continue to provide professional development on ELD standards, language differentiation during content instruction and assessment, and ways to effectively use assessment results to increase student achievement.

Several professional development sessions were delivered during summer 2012 through SY 2014-15 for ESL educators. The Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), for example, is a hands-on, practical course that focuses on strategies for making content area instruction comprehensible and meaningful for ELLs in grades 2 through 12.
OSSE plans to host an ELL institute in 2015 for LEA instructional leaders and teachers to cover policies, language acquisition programs, and best practices to support ESL teachers and general educators who teach ELLs. Strategies that participants will learn include cooperative learning, adapting text for ELLs, building on prior knowledge, offering multiple ways to engage, providing comprehensible input, and making a home/school connection. This training will also be provided with a focus on blended learning.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA plan to evaluate its current assessments and increase the rigor of those assessments and their alignment with the State's college- and career-ready standards, in order to better prepare students and teachers for the new assessments. If so, is this activity likely to result in an increase in the rigor of the State's current assessments and their alignment with college- and career-ready standards?*

OSSE has and continues to evaluate its current assessments, in collaboration with assessment consortia where applicable. Both PARCC and NCSC are undergoing extensive external review processes to ensure alignment to the CCSS. In an effort to prepare students for the new PARCC assessments, OSSE began the alignment of assessments to the CCSS with English/Language Arts and composition for the 2012 statewide assessment. The mathematics statewide assessment was aligned to the CCSS in 2013. DC science assessments will be

aligned to the NGSS standards in SY 2014-15, achieving a higher level of rigorin this core content area.

Preparing for the Next Generation of Assessments

District of Columbia educators decided to transition the statewide assessment to align to the CCSS as the best way to signal to the field the shifts in instruction. Starting in the summer of 2010, OSSE worked with its test contractor to modify the DC CAS. All field test items on the 2011 DC CAS were aligned to the CCSS, and in 2012, operational items on the DC CAS English/Language Arts were aligned to the CCSS to the extent possible while maintaining comparability with a shift in the blueprint to include more informational text. District of Columbia educators also felt that beginning instruction in the CCSS as quickly as possible would be the best training for its schools, educators, and students to prepare for the shift to the PARCC assessment and give students a head start on success.

This effort alerted the field early on to the text complexity and genre selections found in the CCSS. Swift incorporation of the CCSS into DC's instructional and assessment framework was possible because of the close alignment OSSE found in the initial mapping of the District of Columbia's standards to the CCSS and the CCSS to the District of Columbia-owned English/Language Arts items. The 2012 DC CAS mathematics focused on priority standards to better prepare students for the transition to the mathematics CCSS in 2012–13. These mathematics standards were identified as the critical skills and knowledge students need to know to succeed on the CCSS and represent one or two essential skill sets in each grade for teachers to focus their instruction.

In addition, OSSE field tested and operationalized new composition prompts that were aligned to the CCSS and focused on the essential skill of writing in response to a text. Both the English/Language Arts and the composition DC CAS results have been reported by student, school, LEA, and state levels to give schools, educators, students, and parents an indication of how students are performing on the CCSS. OSSE worked with its Technical Advisory Council, consisting of local and national experts in the field of assessments, and its test vendor to ensure that this transition maintained the achievement standards and did not disrupt trend lines in achievement. A cut score review was conducted to ensure alignment. The District's transition to a fully aligned DC CAS mathematics assessment to the CCSS began in 2012–13. Within the Department of Standards, Assessment and Accountability, OSSE formed an Assessment Task Force consisting of teachers, assessment coordinators, and other stakeholders to guide the development of the mathematics assessments and to address any instructional gaps. This allowed the District of Columbia the best opportunity to have all students exposed to and instructed in the CCSS in preparation for the PARCC assessment in SY 2014–15 and beyond.

The District of Columbia is one of the original governing states of PARCC and has been involved with the work from the beginning. Today, OSSE is leading the work with other states to develop and design the next generation of assessments aligned to the CCSS. OSSE is

a member of the Governing Board and Leadership Team. In addition to co-chairing the Test Administration and Systems Working Group, OSSE participates in the following working groups: Accommodations, Accessibility and Fairness; ELA/Literacy; Math; Data Management; Research and Psychometrics; and Formative Assessments in Math, ELA and K-2. The District of Columbia also has representation on the Higher Education Leadership Team, the PARCC Advisory Committee on College Readiness. The District of Columbia has attended design meetings, Common Core Implementation institutes, and all other PARCC multistate meetings. In the lead-up to PARCC administration in the Spring of 2015, the District of Columbia used the PARCC Model Content Frameworks to guide LEAs through their creation of curriculum plans aligned to the new standards. OSSE also sent a team of DC educators to participate in the PARCC Educator Leader Cadres preparatory meetings to develop experts in the field. OSSE is actively involved in all test design decision making and ongoing item reviews. Being a governing state allows the District of Columbia to lead the nation in this reform and to inform stakeholders on the coming shifts through extensive work with the CCSS and the goals of the new assessment. This role gives the District a clear advantage in preparing schools, educators, and students for the next generation of assessments that will measure college- and career-readiness.

Increased Rigor

As the CCSS are more rigorous than the District of Columbia's previous standards, OSSE recognized the need to increase the rigor of instruction in the classroom for successful implementation of the CCSS. OSSE is working in collaboration with the State Board of Education to review and revise graduation requirements to include more focus on college- and career-readiness. Also, a bill passed by D.C. Council requires all students to take either the SAT or ACT and apply to college as part of the graduation requirements. Starting with SY13-14, OSSE implemented statewide in-school SAT availability to fulfill this requirement. Through this application, OSSE is reviewing its reporting requirements and plans to include Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate participation and proficiency, grade point average, dual enrollment, ACT and SAT participation and performance, and other indicators of college- and career-readiness on its statewide report card. Through the State Longitudinal Data System (SLED), OSSE also is collecting data on post-secondary, attendance, persistence, and graduation. All of these data points work together to signal to students, teachers, and parents the shift to more rigor in the classroom. Elements of this data will be posted on LearnDC.org—the D.C. school reporting site.

OSSE's enhanced public reporting shows the continuum of readiness across years and indicates to schools, parents, and students the degree of progress toward college- and career-readiness the District is making and, at the same time, the need for mid-course adjustments. OSSE's continued partnership with DCPS, charter LEAs, PCSB, and several advocacy groups will continue to push the level of rigor in all classrooms for all students. Through these partnerships, OSSE is able to support the District in fully aligning expectations for college- and career-readiness, work to promote higher-level courses, and share data to gauge student performance.

Other Assessments

In SY 2014-2015, OSSE is phasing out the previous standalone DC CAS composition test. The PARCC ELA/Literacy assessment includes extensive composition tasks and a separate writing sub-score, at all tested grade levels, which DC sees as a step forward in emphasizing critical thinking and writing skills at all grade levels. In preparation for this transition, the composition assessment in 2013 was included in the accountability plan detailed in Principle 2. This signaled to educators and families the importance of student writing. The emphasis on writing in response to literature and informational texts is a major instructional shift found in the standards and one where data suggest school leaders, teachers, and students will need ongoing support. OSSE first shared this information in June 2011 as part of the initial outreach to introduce school leaders to the CCSS and the shifts in instruction and assessments.

Over Summer 2011, a panel of teachers reviewed and approved the prompts through content and bias review. In October 2011, OSSE held an initial training for LEAs to explain the shift, describe the new rubric, and release a sample prompt. Additional training and outreach took place at the start of 2012. As OSSE received the results of the annual assessments beginning in 2012, results were analyzed and used to guide more professional development for composition moving forward. The DC CAS composition assessment was administered for the last time in Spring 2014. OSSE will continue to emphasize writing in its professional development for educators, implementation of the CCSS, and inclusion of PARCC writing components as a significant factor in PARCC ELA/Literacy performance.

The District of Columbia's State Board of Education voted to approve the Next Generation Science Standards in December 2013; replacing the District of Columbia's former, locally-developed science standards. OSSE has contracted with WestEd to develop NGSS-aligned science items and design the first NGSS statewide assessment in the nation. This assessment integrates NGSS's disciplinary core ideas, cross-cutting concepts and science and engineering practices in a technology-enhanced platform that supports 21st century science skills. In the development of the NGSS-aligned DC science assessment, educators will be engaged through blueprint, item, content, and bias reviews. Following the first administration of this assessment in Spring 2015, OSSE will undertake extensive studies of validity and NGSS alignment.

OSSE is including the science assessment in the accountability model on a timeline that will allow for a transition to the NGSS and NGSS assessment for students and educators, allowing time for a thorough use of preliminary test data and lessons learned. As a result DC anticipates full inclusion of the Science assessment in accountability in SY2016-17 based on SY2015-16 scores. Table 1.B.ii provides a summary **of assessment transitions and dates for inclusion in** the accountability framework.

Table 1.B.ii. Summary of Assessments Transitions and Dates for Inclusion in to the Accountability Framework.

Subject	Previous Assessments	2014-2015 Assessments	Tested Grades	Test Year for inclusion for School Classifications and Teacher Evaluation
Reading	DC CAS Reading	PARCC ELA/Literacy	3-8, once in high school	2015-16
Math	DC CAS Math	PARCC Math	3-8, once in high school	2015-16
Writing	DC CAS Composition	PARCC ELA/Literacy	3-8, once in high school	2015-16 (as subset of ELA)
Science	DC CAS Science	DC NGSS Assessment	5, 8, high school biology	2015-16
Alternate	DC CAS Alt	NCSC (National Center and State Collaborative) and DC Alt Science	3-8, 11 for NCSC, 5, 8, high school biology for Alt Science	2015-16 for NCSC, 2015-16 for Alt Science

From 2012 to 2014, OSSE administered the DC CAS assessments in English/Language Arts and mathematics for grade 2 and English/Language Arts for grade 9 aligned to the CCSS. These assessments were optional for LEAs and were not used for state accountability purposes. With the transition to PARCC, these assessments were discontinued in 2015. Optional course-based assessments in high school, including ELA I, ELA III, Algebra I and Algebra II will be available to LEAs in place of the grade 9 DC CAS. In SY 2015-16, PARCC K-1 formative assessments and Grade 2 diagnostic exams will be available to LEAs in place of the grade 2 DC CAS.

Additionally, to ensure LEAs have access to aligned assessments that help ensure students are ready for college and careers, OSSE is looking at the ability to provide additional PARCC resources to prepare students once they enter school and throughout their education. These optional tools include: non-summative PARCC assessments and K-1 formative tools that may be used by teachers and schools to benchmark growth and support of instructional decision making.

Moreover, OSSE is working with stakeholders to develop K-2 formative assessments with the goal of assessing students holistically in the following domains: physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches toward learning; language and literacy development; and cognitive development and general knowledge. OSSE will work

with LEAs and early learning community stakeholders to determine the best ways to implement these tools to support high-quality education before statewide summative tests begin in third grade.

Options for high school level mathematics assessments in middle school

The transition to the PARCC assessments offers the District of Columbia the opportunity to offer course-based high school assessments for the first time. In high school, DC students will be required to take the Geometry or Integrated Math II exam and the ELA/Literacy II exam whenever it is most appropriate. Other PARCC high school exams, including Algebra I, Algebra II, Integrated Math I, Integrated Math III, ELA/Literacy I, and ELA/Literacy III are optionally available to LEAs who would like to use the data from those assessments for instructional improvement and marking student progress towards college and career readiness.

Course-based assessments offer students, parents and teachers more specific, valuable performance information that is better aligned to the courses a student is actually taking. It is the goal of OSSE to offer each student an assessment program that is as aligned to their instructional environment as well as college and career ready standards. In line with that goal, OSSE will make some high school level math assessments available to middle school students taking high school level math courses. This availability will be limited to 7th and 8th grade students, who may be allowed to take Geometry, Algebra I, Integrated Math I or Integrated Math II PARCC assessments if the assessment aligns with their coursework. LEAs will indicate to OSSE which middle school students are enrolled in advanced level math courses prior to test registration and students will be allowed to register for one of the above math tests at the request of their LEA. Test results of students who take a high school level math test in middle school will be attributed to their middle schools' school index scores for the purposes of Federal accountability in the year in which they take the test and will be measured on the PARCC performance levels for that test.

Because Geometry or Integrated Math II are required tests for DC high school students, students who take one of these tests in middle school will be required to take the Algebra II or Integrated Math III test in high school when it best aligns to their high school coursework. Algebra II and Integrated Math III are the most advanced math tests offered by PARCC. The results of an Algebra II or Integrated Math III test taken in high school by students who previously took Geometry or Integrated Math II in middle school will be attributed to their high schools' school index scores for the purposes of Federal accountability in the year in which they take the test.

Middle School Accessibility to High School Math Courses

Any LEA in the District of Columbia enrolling middle school grades has the autonomy to offer high school level mathematics coursework to middle school students. In addition, to ensure that the access of such courses is equitable, DCPS will offer an online option of Algebra in 7th grade and Geometry in 8th grade. This option will be available to all DCPS students.

Several charter and DC Public Schools middle schools offer Algebra I or Geometry coursework to middle school students, meaning that students living anywhere in the District of Columbia have the opportunity to apply to schools where high school level coursework is available in middle school. OSSE has further encouraged the availability of high school level mathematics coursework in middle school through the AP Test Fee program and policies to encourage AP/IB courses. By making college-level courses more accessible in high schools, OSSE encourages LEAs to offer advanced courses in middle schools, so that students are prepared to succeed in AP and IB courses earlier in their high school careers.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new standards? If so, will the planned professional development and supports prepare teachers to teach to the new standards, use instructional materials aligned with those standards, and use data on multiple measures of student performance (e.g., data from formative, benchmark, and summative assessments) to inform instruction?*

OSSE has, and will continue to, provide robust trainings to prepare teachers to teach the CCSS to all students. During SY 2013-14, educators of students with disabilities, English Learners, economically disadvantaged students, and low-achieving students were offered several opportunities to learn more about the standards and how to effectively instruct their students with them. Throughout the school year, a group of educators from seven schools elected to participate in the state's CCSS/Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Community of Practice (COP). This opportunity focused on using the UDL framework to provide all students, and especially students with disabilities, access to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the general education classroom. The format of the training consisted of one all-day kick-off training, held at OSSE, with five additional one-hour coaching sessions in LEA clusters. These coaching sessions have been enhanced through a topic-specific webinar series. In addition, all six LEA teams gathered monthly to participate in the COP to discuss best practices and receive support in implementation of UDL. There were a total of 31 participants across the six participating schools. Toward the end of SY2013-14, OSSE's team met with participating LEAs to discuss how the program went for them and any additional supports they may need in order to prepare to be demonstration sites. During SY 2014-15, OSSE has continued to provide supports to members of the COP. These include observations with feedback as well as individualized support for LEAs.

During the months of February and March 2014, OSSE held several trainings for LEAs on the process of deconstructing the CCSS. In this training, participants learned strategies to align reading and mathematics instructional practices to the shifts in the CCSS. Additionally, participants were able to determine specific ways to accommodate students with disabilities without changing the standards or lowering expectations through targeted, developmentally-appropriate strategies that would provide key supports for students. Two half-day training sessions were offered based on grade level and content area taught.

In response to the needs of educators around the CCSS across the District, OSSE worked

across divisions to develop an innovative tool that would allow educators to access deconstructed standards and develop a lesson plan that is rigorous and relevant to their students. During late July and early August 2014, OSSE staff partnered with vendor Cross and Joftus in efforts to work collaboratively with approximately 45 educators across grade and subject levels and who provide instruction to students identified for special education and English Learners services. Over the course of two intensive weeks, OSSE staff and educators from the District worked to deconstruct all of the CCSS. The deconstructed standards have been made available to all educators through an interactive, on-line platform January 2015. OSSE staff, in collaboration with educators participating in the deconstruction work, is training educators and administrators across the District how to effectively use the deconstructed standards and interactive tool to develop standards-based lesson plans and/or curriculum.

The vast majority of students in DC schools, more than 74% of students in 2013, qualify as economically disadvantaged, so supports to all teachers will disproportionately benefit economically disadvantaged students. Nearly all professional development for teachers and school leaders provided by OSSE is specifically attuned to the needs of the predominant population in DC schools, low income students of color. Additionally, DC policymakers have made a particular priority of providing supports for the most economically disadvantaged students directly to schools since the implementation of the Fair Student Funding and School Based Budgeted Act of 2013. The Act sets aside additional funds in DC's Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) for economically disadvantaged students. The Act defines At-Risk students as a DCPS or DC Public Charter school student who is homeless, in foster care, qualifies for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or is overage in high school, which all (except overage) qualify a student as economically disadvantaged and represent the majority of the economically disadvantaged students in DC. The additional funds allocated to DCPS schools under this statute are legislatively required to be 90% distributed directly to school principals to use specifically on initiatives to improve academic achievement among economically disadvantaged students in their schools, according to publicly available plans for improving student achievement among economically disadvantaged students. In 2014-2015, the UPSFF allocated an additional $2,079 per economically disadvantaged student, a total of more than $40 million in additional school funding targeted at DC's most economically disadvantaged students. This approach allows schools to sustainably fund many of the school improvement initiatives created under the ESEA Waiver, and to target school improvement efforts to the needs of their particular economically disadvantaged populations, so that they will successfully meet the revised college and career ready standards .

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and supports to prepare principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership based on the new standards? If so, will this plan prepare principals to do so?*

Supporting Educators

To promote the overall goal of statewide understanding of the CCSS and to ensure successful

implementation, OSSE provides ongoing state-level training to LEA and school leaders and staff in the areas of CCSS in ELA, math, pedagogy, and assessment. . Lead authors of the CCSS have identified six instructional shifts in both ELA and math. The ELA shifts include balancing nonfiction and fiction text, building knowledge in the disciplines, and increasing text complexity with grade advancement, text-based answers, writing from sources, and academic vocabulary. Mathematics instructional shifts include focus, coherence, fluency, deep understanding, applications, and dual intensity of practicing and understanding. OSSE continues to provide schools with a specified level of professional development and offers more intensive support to schools based on their classifications, as detailed in Principles 2 and 3. For example, to ensure the District of Columbia meets the needs of teachers in the lowest-performing schools or teachers who are not rated effective or highly effective, preference has been given to them to attend live professional development sessions that fill up quickly. OSSE will also provides on-site trainings at Focus and Priority schools upon request. For educators and school leaders in other school categories, OSSE will make more webinars and online tools available and will focus in-person trainings on specialized topics.

For Priority and Focus schools that fail to meet exit criteria, OSSE also provides targeted interventions to principals and instructional coaches focused on strengthening CCSS instruction via on-site, data-driven technical assistance. Additional details on this intervention called the Learning Support Network intervention are in section 2.D.

Rather than offer professional development that simply makes educators and school leaders familiar with a set of standards, the trainings OSSE offers are delivered through the lens of the instructional shifts, thus promoting and supporting a deep and internalized understanding of the new standards' teaching and learning principles. This approach allows teachers and school leaders to become familiar with the CCSS, compare former District of Columbia standards to the CCSS, and develop an understanding of how teaching, learning, and instructional materials need to evolve to meet the demand of the new standards' increased rigor.

Two specific examples of trainings OSSE offered to teachers and administrators addressing these instructional shifts include *Instructional Routines for Effective Small Group Instruction and Intervention* and *Authentic Performance Tasks*.

The *Instructional Routines for Effective Small Group Instruction and Intervention* training is designed to support teachers across the District of Columbia, where approximately 50 percent of students (elementary and secondary) are scoring below proficient in English/Language Arts. Based on the "gradual release of responsibility" model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) and targeted to address specific English/Language Arts (ELA) needs (comprehension, fluency, phonics, vocabulary), the training aims to teach participants six explicit and systematic instructional routines. These routines provide precise teaching moves to accelerate students' learning and boost their ability to understand complex text.

The *Authentic Performance Tasks* training answers the call for building knowledge in the disciplines so that students develop deep understanding of text through intense practice and providing text-based answers. Having a collection of motivating, authentic performance assessments with corresponding tasks and rubrics aligned to the CCSS across grade levels and content areas is a key strategy to differentiate instruction. Using these tools effectively also will motivate students, increase achievement, and save teachers' time. The seminar provides step-by-step procedures that will help educators make differentiated instruction happen in the classroom.

To address and promote school leadership for implementation of the CCSS, OSSE offered a weeklong Summer Leadership Institute open to all schools willing to commit to a year-long, classroom based lesson study of CCSS implementation. OSSE is collaborating with PARCC Inc., the project management partner for the PARCC Consortium, for additional support for principals, assistant principals, and others to participate in the PARCC Educator Leader Cadres.

To effectively implement the CCSS for mathematics, OSSE continues to concentrate on addressing the instructional shifts between the District of Columbia's standards and the CCSS while incorporating the Standards for Mathematical Practice. In 2011, OSSE conducted a crosswalk comparing the District of Columbia's standards and the CCSS. This analysis revealed major areas of difference, and those shifts drove the effort to tailor instruction aligned to the CCSS to ultimately will move student achievement upward.

In 2012, OSSE began providing opportunities for all LEAs to build their instructional capacity through various mediums, such as trainings, accessing videos that model exemplar lessons on OSSE's Common Core website, reviewing exemplar tasks and lessons specifically aligned to the CCSS-M, and examining sample assessment items that provide students with consistent exposure to higher-level questions expected in instruction and parallels what will be seen on PARCC.

As part of OSSE's commitment to continuous and sustainable improvement, participant feedback is solicited and analyzed after each professional development session. The feedback is, and will continue to be, used to inform both stakeholder understanding and future professional development sessions.

For the District of Columbia to be successful in improving student achievement, LEAs must be integrally involved in supporting teachers and school leaders as they bring the CCSS to the classroom. Through RTTT, each participating LEA created an implementation plan to include professional development, curriculum alignment, program evaluation, and analysis of quality material that was reviewed and approved by the Common Core Task Force. Each year, LEAs have been required to revisit and revise their implementation plan and include in their statement of work how they will support the transition to the CCSS.

The 2011 PLaCEs grant supported a consortium of RTTT-participating charter LEAs and DCPS schools in developing a professional learning community that has created an online library of 50 CCSS video lessons per grade. These lessons, produced for both mathematics and English/Language Arts for grades 3 through 9, are designed to support every teacher in the adoption of the CCSS, regardless of participation in RTTT. The consortium has used the internationally recognized technique of lesson study: a collaborative approach in which teachers develop pedagogical content knowledge to research, evaluate, and refine the teaching of the CCSS. The consortium's lesson study teams created and refined exemplar lessons to add to the video lesson library. In an embedded "each one, teach one" approach, the consortium's first cohort of 12 schools mentored a set of schools in year one that became the consortium's second cohort in year two.

As a governing state of PARCC, the District of Columbia has continued to make available all resources provided by the consortium, including, but not limited to, the principle of Universal Design for Learning. Until the realignment of PARCC working groups in 2014, the District of Columbia served as the chair for the Common Core Implementation and Educator Engagement working group. This group was integral in releasing the PARCC Model Content Frameworks and creation of Educator Leader Cadres. The District has disseminated the Model Content Frameworks and invited educators to take part in informational webinars.
OSSE continued to facilitate the Educator Leader Cadres with members from both DCPS and the charter schools to build expertise in the field by assembling a cohort of dedicated District of Columbia Educators to join the DC PARCC Educator Leader Cadre. These select individuals are experts in ELA and/or mathematics and will serve all of DC in leading the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Cadre members continue to engage in professional development with other educators, from participating PARCC states. Through face-to-face meetings and virtual convening, the educator leaders share best practices regarding implementation and use of PARCC materials, engage in reviewing PARCC and PARCC state developed instructional materials, and become active leaders in state and local implementation efforts. This work is aligned with the District of Columbia's implementation plans and is expected to continue and grow through SY 2014-2015 and beyond.
A gap analysis conducted by an independent assessment contractor in 2012, also determined areas of improvement and/or need as determined by DC CAS scores and the grade correlation between the District of Columbia's current standards and the CCSS.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question – *Does the SEA intend to work with the State's IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare: 1) incoming teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new college- and career-ready standards; and 2) incoming principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership on teaching to the new standards? If so, will the implementation of the plan likely improve the preparation of incoming teachers and principals?*

OSSE collectively recognizes that to have successful students who are ready for college and careers, it must have teachers who are more than capable to prepare them. As a result, OSSE

has established competitive priorities in its Title II, Part A Teacher Quality Improvement and Title II, Part B Mathematics Science Partnerships grant programs to drive crucial grant funding toward innovative professional development programs, with a focus on CCSS and NGSS. Both programs place a strong emphasis on ensuring principals have access to the tools and resources necessary to help them monitor and assess high-quality instruction and ensure teachers are making necessary instructional shifts to teach the CCSS.

OSSE also has begun the process of aligning teacher preparation expectations to meet a modern set of standards and criteria, based on the CCSS. Standards have been created in the critical disciplines of Elementary Education (Grades K-6), English/Language Arts (Grades 5-8), English/Language Arts (Grades 7-12), Reading (Grades K-12), Mathematics (Grades 5-8), and Mathematics (Grades 7-12). During 2015, OSSE will move forward with revising standards in the remaining content areas with the objective of engaging the State Board of Education and a range of local education stakeholders in the finalization and adoption of these standards in the coming year.

In addition, OSSE has developed professional development activities based on school classifications described in Principle 2, and the tiered teacher effectiveness plan in Principle 3, to meet the needs of all teachers. In spring 2013, OSSE developed guidance on the way in which DC LEAs must develop their teacher effectiveness plans, and how these plans can be aligned to the CCSS. In 2015, OSSE is partnering with 14 District of Columbia LEAs to develop a model teacher evaluation system for opt-in use by any DC LEA. The project places significant emphasis on the way in which evaluation can be used not only for making human capital decisions, but also for improving instruction.

Through its partnership with the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), institutions of higher education (IHEs) in the District of Columbia that are jointly accredited by DC and CAEP have begun the process of designing and implementing educator preparation programs based on rigorous new standards aligned with CCSS, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment, and Support Consortium (INTASC) core principles. OSSE continues to provide comprehensive, high-quality training and technical assistance to key staff within DC's IHEs to support effective program design. These new accreditation and specialty area standards are firmly rooted in the core principles of ensuring school-age children have access to instruction that prepares them for college and career readiness, and ensuring that in-service teaching is held to rigorous accountability standards.

OSSE embraces the USDE's proposed revision to Title II HEOA, which promotes the inclusion of performance-based metrics as a significant indicator of effectiveness in educator preparation. The spirit of this proposed revision aligns with the theory of action behind the continued development of teacher and leader preparation profiles, which will provide OSSE with an added mechanism for identifying effectiveness in teacher and principal preparation programs. After launch of the educator preparation profile in early 2015, OSSE will work with educator preparation programs to understand implications regarding program design,

and OSSE will begin the process of determining whether the profiles can be used as a mechanism for determining program approval status. Combined with OSSE's updated licensure standards, these efforts will serve as venues for improved alignment and capacity building to increase academic rigor for all students through effective utilization of the CCSS in DC's classrooms.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA plan to expand access to college-level courses or their prerequisites, dual enrollment courses, or accelerated learning opportunities? If so, will this plan lead to more students having access to courses that prepare them for college and a career?*

OSSE's Division of Postsecondary and Career Education (PSCE) supports programs that improve the overall postsecondary enrollment, graduation, certificate completion, and employment rates for youth and adults in the District of Columbia. PSCE also assists residents in obtaining adult literacy proficiency and acquiring a GED or another similar credential. Additionally, the PSCE assists District youth in career awareness, exploration, and preparation. As of October 2014, PSCE expanded to include the DC Youth Reengagement Center (REC). The REC supports disengaged youth, ages 16-24, as they reconnect to educational options, earn a secondary credential, and transition to employment and/or postsecondary education.

PSCE plans to expand access to college-level courses or their prerequisites, dual enrollment courses, and accelerated learning opportunities in the following ways. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)) is a school improvement system that targets traditionally underrepresented middle and high school students in the "academic middle" to help them become college ready. Through the AVID Elective and AVID instructional strategies, students learn critical thinking and organizational skills, receive tutoring, and gain exposure to college, raising achievement in and access to rigorous coursework, and supporting successful transition to college and careers. AVID school sites benefit from ongoing teacher and staff leadership development, assistance translating CCSS to teaching practice, and help using data and instructional tools to build a school wide college-going culture. OSSE staff will serve as AVID District Directors for seven schools in three LEAs implementing AVID in Washington, DC. In this role, OSSE provides oversight, technical assistance, and professional development to AVID school sites. OSSE further financially supports AVID through the U.S. Department of Education College Access Challenge Grant (CACG).

The AP Test Fee Program is an initiative provided in partnership between OSSE, the College Board, and the US Department of Education to provide financial assistance for low-income students taking AP exams in the District. The goal of the AP Test Fee Program is to encourage students who have successfully completed an AP class to take the corresponding exam without fear of cost.

OSSE PCSE also provides access to rigorous career preparation for DC high school students through guidance and funding to DCPS and charter schools in support of high quality career

and technical education. Using both local and federal funding streams, OSSE supports programs in 16 career clusters representing high skill/ high wage employment opportunities, particularly in STEM fields.

Located in 25 of the 32 District high schools, these programs reach over 5,000 students annually. With guidance from OSSE, these high schools offer a sequence of career and technical education courses that combine rigorous academics and advanced technical knowledge. The course sequences are organized around industry-based standards, assessments, and curricula. In addition the courses provide high school students with the opportunity to participate in internships, gain early college credit though dual enrollment, and earn certificates or industry-recognized credentials. Examples of successful programs include those operating in the context of whole-school reform initiatives such as the six high schools involved in Project Lead the Way and the two high schools involved in High Schools that Work.

In addition, OSSE is supporting the development of nine career academies in eight local high schools. In FY13, PSCE provided guidance, technical assistance, and support to the CTE Task Force in the development of a CTE Strategic Plan. In FY14, the PSCE implemented key aspects of the Strategic Plan through the administration of the CTE Innovation Fund, which was tasked with developing career academies in District high schools, distributing fund testing costs for students taking certification exams, and dispersing funds to the UDC-CC to improve its CTE programming. In July 2014, nine academies completed a year of planning and were deemed "qualified career academies" by the National Academy Foundation (NAF). These academies opened for student enrollment in August 2014 and serve a total of 570 students.

The academies, collectively called the DC Career Academy Network (DC-CAN), have established an Executive Advisory Board that is responsible for the overall strategic planning of the NAF career academies in the District of Columbia. The Executive Advisory Board consists of representatives from the business community, including leaders from hospitality Information Technology and engineering. They are joined by a representative from the Federal City Council, the University of the District of Columbia, Georgetown University, participating LEA leadership, and principals of the schools. The Executive Advisory Board is committed to ensuring that 100 percent of the students in the academies have paid internships in their fields of study and graduate from high school with a set of college- and career-ready skills. The DC-CAN has also established industry advisory boards for each of the three fields. The industry advisory boards work closely with the schools to provide advice on curriculum, provide work-based learning opportunities for students and support the schools' individual needs.

Other notable programs include STEM-based programs such as the science and technology programs at Wilson and McKinley. OSSE also supports the Microsoft Academy programs at 15 public high schools. During SY 2013-14, 260 students earned Microsoft Office Specialist certifications. The Academies offer courses that prepare students to take and pass Microsoft

Office Specialist (MOS) certification exams. Students throughout the District are also actively engaged in the Future Business Leaders of America, a nationally recognized career and technical education student organization. Students compete locally and nationally to showcase their talents in the areas of business and industry. To further extend students' exposure to college and careers, the Office of Career and Technical Education hosts the Annual College and Career Conferences for Young Men and Women, which feature high impact sessions that expose students to diverse career options.

OSSE Scholars program is an academic enrichment opportunity for high-achieving, low-income District of Columbia high school students. Through partnerships with selective postsecondary universities, this program exposes students to university campuses, various academic disciplines and peers from a wide variety of backgrounds. The goals of the program include early college exposure to ensure students' academic readiness, opportunity to take college-level classes, and exposure to top-tier universities to promote smart college choice.

In 2012, OSSE's Postsecondary Division, in collaboration with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, developed regulations to guide dual enrollment programs in DC. Since SY 2012-13, OSSE has offered financial support to students in the District participating in dual enrollment programs through OSSE's Dual Enrollment Fund (DEF). The dual enrollment programs enable high school students to enroll directly into credit-earning college courses, providing valuable experience in college-level academics and navigating a college environment, thereby, allowing students to better understand what is required of them to succeed in college and improving students' overall college readiness. Dual enrollment course opportunities also increase students' engagement by giving them access to more academic courses and incentivizing their pursuit of postsecondary enrollment by reducing the time to complete a postsecondary degree. Finally, dual enrollment provides an opportunity for high schools and postsecondary institutions to collaboratively strengthen their institutional and curricular partnerships. However, there are extensive barriers, including financial constraints, that often prevent students from accessing dual enrollment services. OSSE's DEF aims to remove these financial burdens for District students who are eligible for dual enrollment programs by covering college costs including: unmet tuition, fees, books, and Metro transportation. LEAs work directly with the District's postsecondary institutions to create Dual Enrollment Partnership Agreements.

Agreements between LEAs and post-secondary institutions vary greatly in terms of whether high schools offer credit for classes taken at the partner university. OSSE is currently collaborating closely with DCPS to strengthen and expand the dual enrollment program so that more students are not only able to receive college credit for classes taken at partner universities, but to also receive high school credit for those classes.

Beginning SY 2015-16, OSSE will expand its financial support for dual enrollment through a two-pronged approach. First, OSSE will release an RFA to solicit applications from local postsecondary institutions and LEAs to work together on dual enrollment programs in which

students will receive both high school and college credit for courses taken. Consortia of local postsecondary institutions and LEAs will work directly to create dual enrollment partnership agreements that align with the District's dual enrollment regulations. Secondly, OSSE will offer a scholarship for students enrolled through the High School/College Internship Program (HISCIP) which is a dual enrollment program for DC high school residents enrolled in a DC public school or DC public charter school.

In the SY 2014-15, OSSE planned to make changes to the current regulations by adding a data submission requirement of universities so that OSSE can better track student outcomes and ensure OSSE focuses on continuous improvement in oversight and facilitation of dual enrollment programs for DC students. The consideration of these changes us underway.

In addition to providing funding, OSSE will expand access to postsecondary information in the following ways:

College Readiness Metrics
OSSE is improving public reporting of 15 new college readiness metrics at the state and LEA level on our public facing LEARN DC site, such as performance on college entrance exams, performance on AP and IB tests, and postsecondary program application, enrollment and completion.

Smart College Choices Campaign
OSSE is also expanding access to postsecondary information through its Smart College Choices Campaign. In addition to providing posters to LEAs that publicize graduation and retention rates of institutions of higher education popular among DC students, OSSE has entered into a partnership with the Education Advisory Board (EAB), a division of the Advisory Board Company. One deliverable from this partnership is the development of a College Report Generator tool. This tool is a workbook through which a user can select an institution and receive an easily digestible summary report about the postsecondary institution. The report includes several key details about the institution: (a) key facts, such as location, total enrollment, freshman class size, and average net price by income level; (b) information on admissions, such as typical standardized test scores, enrollment by race, and acceptance rate; (c) information on graduation, such as overall graduation rate, graduation rate by race, and graduation rate for DC students; and (d) information on transfer pathways, such as what percent of students transfer and where students transfer. The College Report Generator will be an important tool to inform smart postsecondary choices, and can be used by high school advisors and counselors, students considering multiple institutions, and parents and families. This tool will help facilitate and focus discussion about postsecondary selection in order to ensure that all DC students, including those who participate in the DC TAG program, attend postsecondary institutions where they can succeed. OSSE is currently gathering stakeholder feedback about the data points included in the tool, and hopes to release the College Report Generator tool in June 2015.

Summary

The District of Columbia's size and the resultant proximity of education partners allows for collaboration to occur much more easily than in other jurisdictions. This fact provides a great advantage in the implementation of the CCSS and transition to aligned assessments. From the very start of the process, there has been stakeholder buy-in, support, and a desire for an aggressive time frame for implementation. This timeline will allow the District of Columbia to get a head start in providing schools and educators the necessary resources and support so that the standards have been implemented with fidelity by SY 2014–15. This will give students the best opportunity to show success through the PARCC assessment and other Next Generation Assessments, and to demonstrate college- and career-readiness.

For additional information, see Attachment 12: Principle 1 Documents
Key Milestones Chart (All Principles)
2012 DC CAS Blueprints for English/Language Arts and Math
Grade 4, 7, and 10 Common Core Aligned Prompts–Composition
OSSE CORE Professional Development

1.C Develop and Administer Annual, Statewide, Aligned, High-Quality Assessments that Measure Student Growth

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

Option A	**Option B**	**Option C**
X The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition. i. Attach the State's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)	☐ The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs. i. Provide the SEA's plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no	☐ The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs. i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement

	later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.	standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA's plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA's accountability system provide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for all LEAs in the State and for all Title I schools in those LEAs based on (1) student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, and other subjects at the State's discretion, for all students and all subgroups of students identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II); (2) graduation rates for all students and all subgroups; and (3) school performance and progress over time, including the performance and progress of all subgroups?*

The District of Columbia application for flexibility proposes a system of school recognition, accountability, and support-based interventions that focus on enhancing student growth and enhanced achievement and rapidly improve low-performing schools. This proposal capitalizes on leveraging and clarifying the distinct functions within our system, differentiating OSSE's role as the SEA and the Public Charter School Board's (PCSB) role as the charter authorizer, and acknowledging the variety of public schools, with one geographical, traditional LEA and 60 charter LEAs. This model also relies upon in-depth and accurate data collection to support sound decisions that will appropriately support student achievement and growth.

In recent years, LEAs have spent considerable time designing and implementing frameworks for school evaluations. PCSB created the Performance Management Framework (PMF) for charter schools, and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) adopted the School Scorecard system. The systems provide LEAs with valuable insights, based upon an array of data points, as they work on improving schools and accelerating student learning. (See Attachment 13 for more information on the PMF and the School Scorecard system.) The District's proposal for flexibility builds on and acknowledges the strengths of these performance frameworks.
This proposal is based on the belief that educators and professionals in schools are in the best position to identify and respond to student needs. OSSE is committed to differentiating its accountability framework, providing LEAs with high levels of performance and demonstrated success increased autonomy and flexibility from oversight that, in the case of high performing schools, is burdensome and unnecessary. Our ESEA flexibility waiver renewal request builds on this premise and establishes ambitious and achievable goals while best targeting resources to improve student achievement.

In SY 2012-13, OSSE implemented its new accountability framework put forth in the original ESEA waiver request, and has seen steady improvement. Specifically, DC has seen 4 percentage point gains in reading and 3 percentage point gains in mathematics on the DC statewide assessment, which represents the sixth straight year of academic gains.

During SY 2013-14, 50 percent of District of Columbia students were proficient in English/Language Arts and 55 percent tested proficient in math. Using strategies outlined in this ESEA flexibility request, proficiency rates are expected to improve statewide to 73 percent in English/Language Arts and 74 percent in mathematics by 2017-18. Additionally, the District expects to see graduation rates improve substantially. For SY 2013-14, the cohort graduation rate is 61 percent.

The goal is to have a graduation rate of 85 percent. The District of Columbia seeks to achieve this goal by setting targets that reduce the number of non-graduates by 10 percent each year.

Commitment to Educational Excellence

The District of Columbia has made tremendous efforts to drive academic achievement in schools through policy changes and increased support, including a commitment to charter schools, mayoral control, universal high-quality early childhood education, rigorous programs enacted under Race to the Top (RTTT), and a strong tradition of school choice.

In 2007 the District revamped its educational system with the passage of the Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA). This Act brought about major shifts in management, accountability, and oversight. PERAA turned over control of DCPS to the Mayor, which set the stage for reinvigorated efforts to improve public schools, including closing low-performing or under-enrolled schools, creating the IMPACT teacher and staff evaluation system, providing bonuses for highly effective teachers, and increasing momentum around improvement. Additionally, PERAA eliminated the DC Board of Education as a charter school authorizer, placed former Board of Education charter schools under the oversight authority of PCSB, transferred the Board's state-level authority to a new SEA (OSSE), and created the State Board of Education (SBOE) to provide leadership in policy for all publicly funded DC schools.

In 2015, the Center for Education Reform ranked the District of Columbia first in the nation in its charter school law. Over the past 15 years, charter schools have grown to serve 44 percent of public school students, making the District of Columbia the state with the largest share of publicly educated pupils enrolled in charter schools. New charters open each year, and existing charter schools consistently add grades each year.

The District of Columbia continues to focus support on universal, high-quality pre-K for District of Columbia three- and four-year-olds. This initiative has been exceptionally successful. According to the *Education Week for Quality Counts* report released in January 2011, the District of Columbia has one of the highest participation rates for early childhood education in the nation, with more than 76 percent of three- and four-year-olds enrolled in academic

programs.

The District of Columbia took advantage of this momentum to apply for the Federal Race to The Top (RTT) grant to accelerate its innovative school reform efforts. The significant work initiated through RTTT provides an additional foundation upon which to sustain and build upon early gains. Specifically, the RTTT framework provided opportunities to buttress the support system for the bottom 20 percent schools through the development of LEA and state-level data systems to support instructional improvement, and the expansion of new teacher evaluation systems based on student performance. Each of these has been implemented by 30 RTTT LEAs serving over 90 percent of pre-K–12 students.

RTTT also enhanced the District of Columbia's ability to quickly enact reform through CCCS adoption and transition efforts. OSSE was the second SEA in the nation to align its ELA and mathematics state assessments to college- and career-ready standards. This early adoption and intensive, sustained focus on implementation allowed LEAs and schools to use assessments to improve the rigor of instruction and supports.

NCLB laudably focused on student performance and increased accountability for high-need students. However, the law has resulted in unintended consequences, such as narrowing the scope of school curriculum. The focus on test scores to the exclusion of student growth has inadvertently lowered rather than raised school standards. Interventions under this system continue to be a "one size fits all" approach, limiting LEAs and schools from tailoring services to more individualized student and school needs.

Under that status quo, OSSE capacity and support for LEAs and schools was spread thin given the number of LEAs and schools that the system identified as "failing". With this application, OSSE broadens the scope of rewards and recognition to include schools that show significant student progress, and tailors state-level supports based on need.

The District of Columbia's application for ESEA flexibility is a commitment to smarter decisions based on innovative, research-based strategies to support dramatic improvements at low-performing schools and sustained improvement for all schools.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

OSSE proposes two AMOs for the District of Columbia: proficiency in ELA and proficiency in mathematics. Proficiency AMOs will be reported annually at the state, LEA, and school levels for all students and all subgroups, and will be used to guide interventions in LEAs and schools identified as needing additional support. AMOs will initially be set at the school level based on school year 2010-11 performance; trajectories will be set to decrease by half the percentage of non-proficient students by 2017 through interim school-based targets.

The proficiency AMO seeks to reduce by half at the school level the number of students who are not proficient within six years. This trajectory will result in an average 4.5% annual growth

in each school, which is projected to include approximately 1,450 additional students that will be identified as proficient each year, or an average increase at each school of eight additional students achieving proficiency each year. The following charts show how these targets are projected under the waiver.

Figure 2.A.i.1: English/Language Arts State Targets

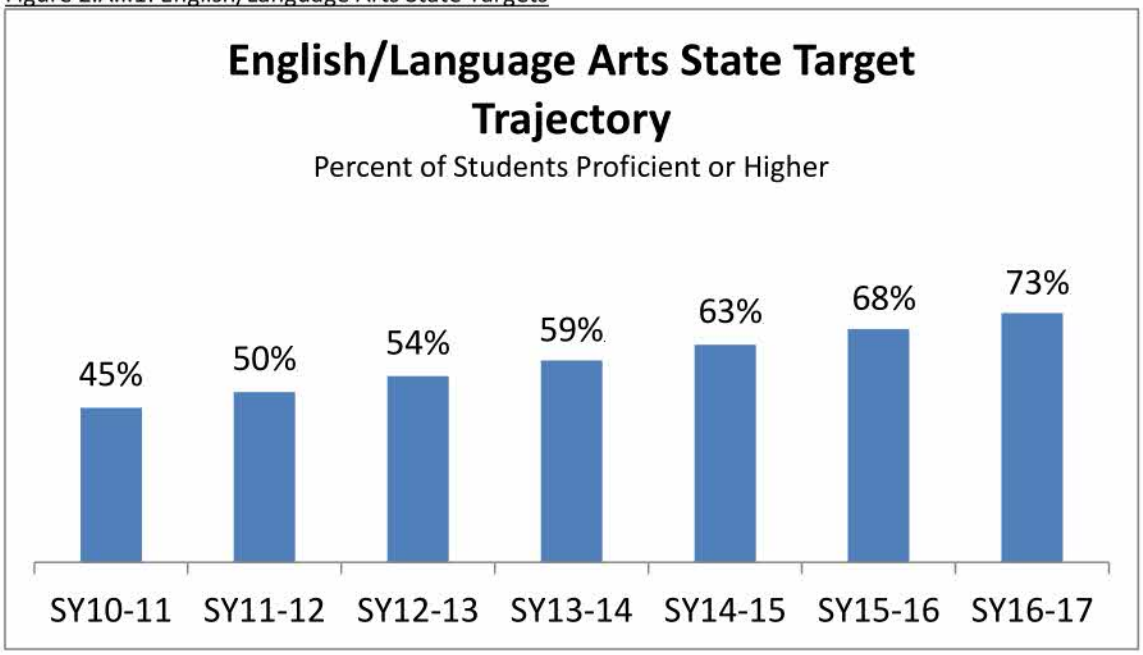
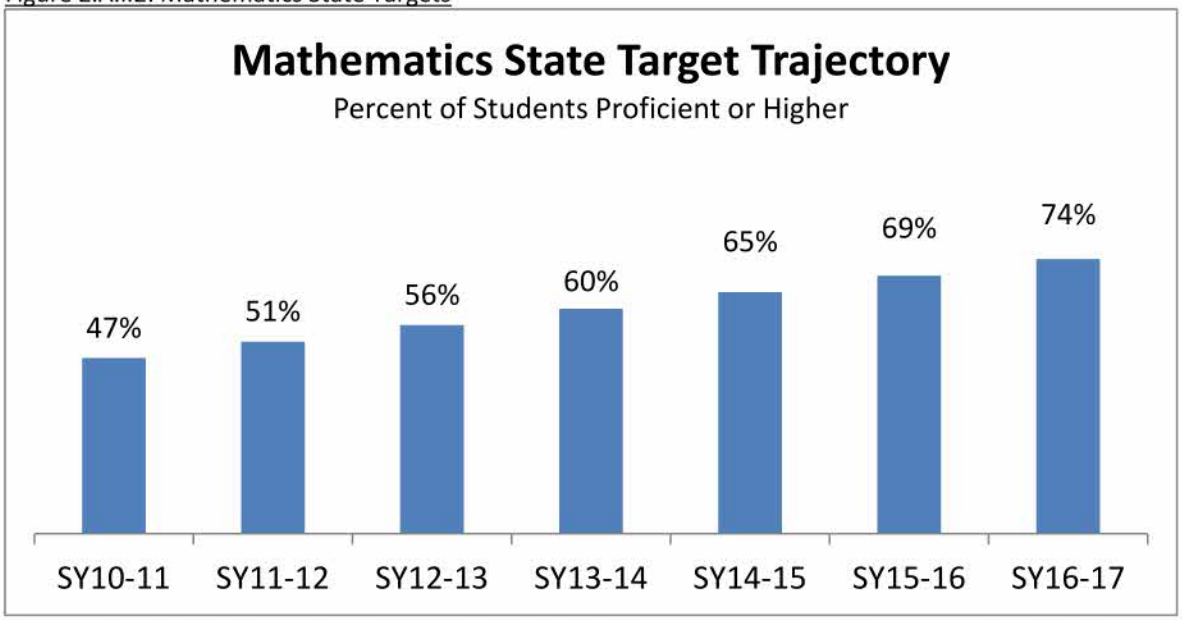


Figure 2.A.i.2: Mathematics State Targets



A more in-depth discussion of AMOs, their significance, and how they are calculated can be found in Section 2B.

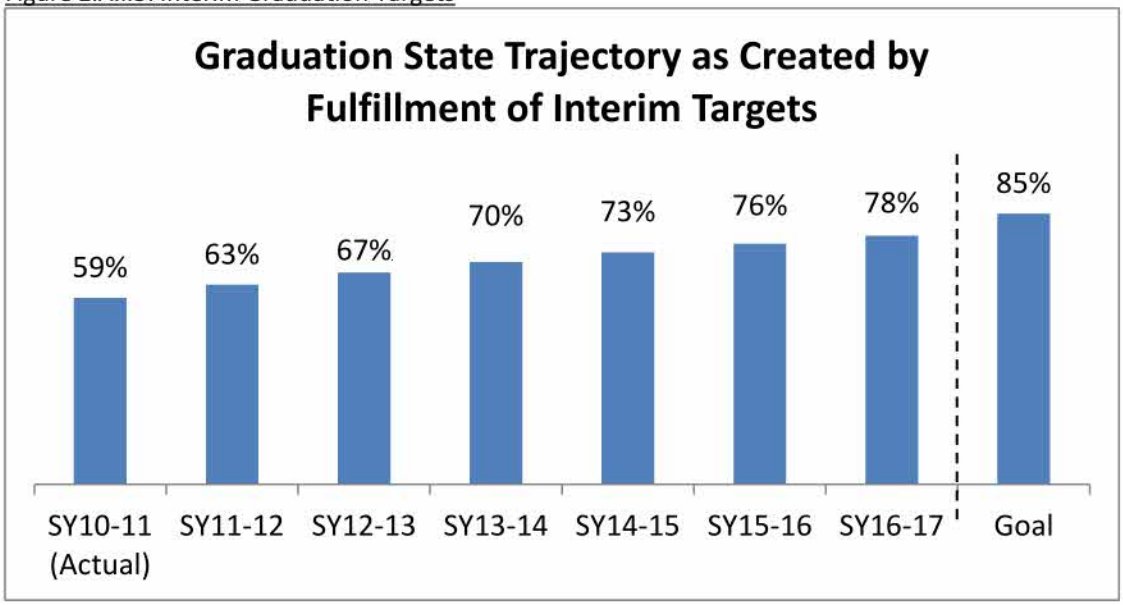
Graduation Rate

The District of Columbia's plan to maintain the statewide adjusted cohort graduation rate goal of 85 percent is consistent with the current graduation rate goal as listed in the accountability workbook. To reach this goal, the District of Columbia has set interim graduation rate targets based on annually reducing the number of non-graduating students by 10% from the prior year's rate. This progression with the interim targets is shown below in Tables 2.A.i.1 and Figure 2.A.i.3.

Table 2.A.i.1: Interim Graduation Targets

Year	Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Interim Target	Non-Graduates	Change in number of non-graduates
2010-11 Actual	58.6%	2095	
2011-12 Interim Target	62.7%	1886	209 (10%)
2012-13 Interim Target	66.5%	1697	189 (10%)
2013-14 Interim Target	69.8%	1527	170 (10%)
2014-15 Interim Target	72.8%	1374	153 (10%)
2015-16 Interim Target	75.5%	1237	137 (10%)
2016-17 Interim Target	78.0%	1113	124 (10%)
DC Goal	**85.0%**	**758**	

Figure 2.A.i.3: Interim Graduation Targets



Report Cards

The development of the accountability system has created an opportunity to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders (LEAs, charter school authorizers, parents, elected officials, community members, and interested individuals) in the development, collection, and reporting of educational data. As part of this work, the District of Columbia created and launched LearnDC.org, a website that serves as the city's education "report card", and which reports on critical factors that parents need to make informed decisions about selecting a well-suited school for their children. OSSE will continue to collaborate with community partners to assist parents in the use of accountability information, enabling greater transparency and sound educational decisions. OSSE will achieve this goal, first, by continuing to improve annual school report cards, and, second, by helping parents understand and use these report cards.

Currently, report cards—at the state, LEA, and school level—provide information about numerous metrics. Specifically:

- State report cards include:
  - Assessment data in ELA, mathematics, composition, and science, by year, grade, and subgroup and including details of targets and whether those targets have been met;
  - NAEP scores;
  - Graduation rates by cohort and subgroup and including details of targets and whether those targets have been met;
  - In-seat attendance rates; and
  - Instructional staff (percent highly qualified teachers).

- LEA report cards include:
  - Assessment data in ELA, mathematics, composition, and science by year, grade, and subgroup and including details of targets and whether those targets have been met;
  - Graduation rates by cohort and subgroup and including details of targets and whether those targets have been met;
  - Instructional staff (percent highly qualified teachers); and
  - Profile information, which includes data on enrollment, median growth percentiles, and special education annual performance reporting results.

- School report cards include:
  - Classification;
  - Assessment data in ELA, mathematics, composition, and science, by year, grade, and subgroup and including details of targets and whether those targets have been met;
  - Graduation rates by cohort and subgroup and including details of targets and whether those targets have been met;
  - In-seat attendance rates;
  - Instructional staff (percent highly qualified teachers); and

- Profile information, which includes data on enrollment, program information, discipline data, mid-year entry and withdrawal data, median growth percentiles, and special education annual performance reporting results.

School report cards also include "equity reports," which provide schools, families, and communities with transparent and comparable information related to equity across all DC schools. For the first time this year, these equity reports are "live" to allow more meaningful access and use. Metrics—which are school-specific and compare to the DC average—include enrollment and demographics; mid-year entry and withdrawal; in-seat attendance; suspensions (1+ and 11+ days); assessment median growth percentiles; and four- and five-year graduation rates.

Report cards are updated regularly to reflect the most current data available, including performance on targets and the resulting school classification. In addition to school-level report cards, OSSE reports performance on AMOs by subgroup at the LEA and state levels. Since DCPS LEA report card covers all DCPS schools, OSSE will also continue to issue a report card that includes overall performance of all charter LEAs based on subgroup and all student AMOs, to inform school choice and support the monitoring of PCSB's roles and responsibilities with regard to ESEA accountability. Additional detailed information about robust school reports can be found in Section 2F.

Development and Dissemination of Additional Data

OSSE will continue to report information required by federal law, including student progress on measurable objectives, test participation rates, graduation rates for adjusted cohorts, and other academic indicators. In addition to these federally-required report card metrics, OSSE seeks opportunities to provide additional information beyond that required for the NCLB report card. Data updates (in addition to the public charter sector LEA report card) include:

- College readiness metrics negotiated with LEA stakeholders;
- Improvements and additions to instructional staff data to come into compliance with federal requirements;
- Metrics related to our local Healthy Schools Act, also negotiated with LEA stakeholders; and
- An additional functional ability to download data in CSV format to allow for more sophisticated analysis and comparisons by users.

The District agrees and supports parents' ability to make informed decisions by providing a range of state, school, and LEA information on metrics of interest. The waiver will provide an

opportunity to continue to address the kinds of data gaps outlined by the Brookings Institution.[1]

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system create incentives and provide support that is likely to be effective in closing achievement gaps for all subgroups of students?*

Statewide Network of Tiered Recognition, Accountability, and Support

As the SEA, OSSE is responsible for the statewide accountability system. This accountability system identifies and classifies schools into one of five categories based on relevant performance indicators. This tiered system of recognition, accountability, and support will be structured monitor performance and to provide schools with appropriate supports. An overview of this system is outlined below.

Table 2.A.i.2: School Classifications Elements

School Classification	System Elements
Reward Schools	• Gold Ribbon School of Excellence Award • Best Practice sharing
Priority Schools	• Ongoing monitoring of DCPS and PCSB and school implementation • 20% Title I set-aside to support planning and implementation efforts • Access to 1003 (a) funds • Professional development for leaders of schools identified for OSSE intervention • SIG monitoring and technical assistance (for participating schools)
Focus Schools	• Ongoing monitoring of DCPS and PCSB and school implementation • 20% Title I set aside to support planning and implementation efforts • Access to 1003 (a) funds • Professional development for leaders of schools identified for OSSE

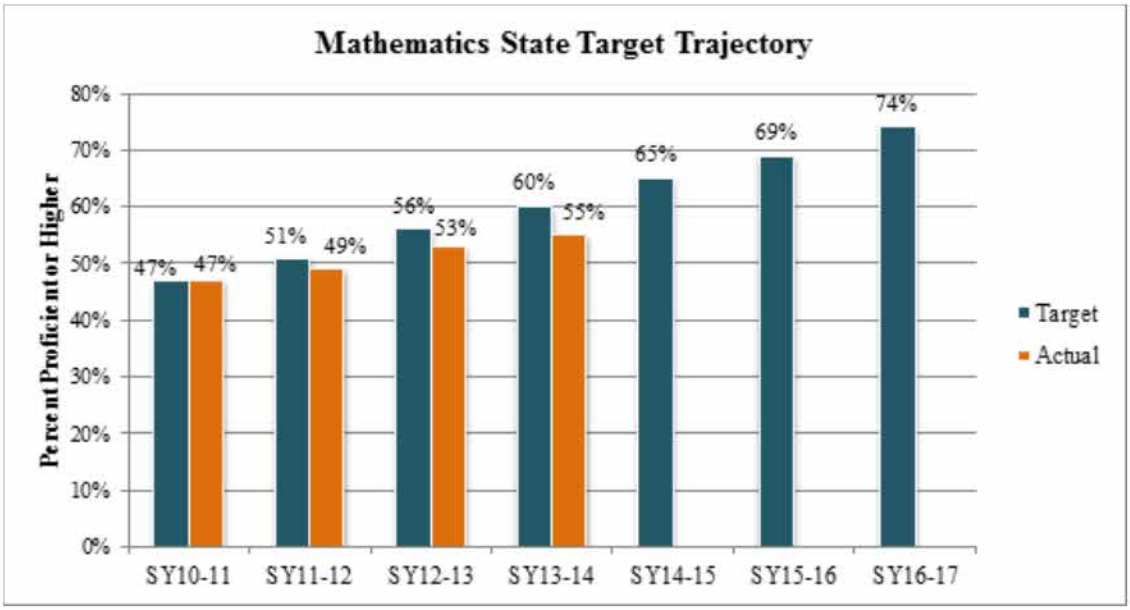
[1] Whitehurst, Russ. "The Education Choice and Competition Index: Background and Results 2011." The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, Nov. 30, 2011.

	intervention •
Other Title I schools/AMO Schools	• Technical assistance on school planning in the Consolidated Title I application. • Title I monitoring

In 2014, OSSE developed a number of new initiatives to carry out its obligations under Principle 2 of the Waiver via a Statewide System of Support. The system aims to raise school quality across all of the District's schools, while specifically targeting resources toward supporting the most challenged schools in particular, which are Priority and Focus schools.

A New Model of Support

While the District of Columbia has made significant strides in increasing student achievement, we have not met the performance targets outlined in the original ESEA waiver, especially in reading, math, and high school graduation.



For example, the District of Columbia set a student achievement target of approximately 75% proficiency in reading and math by SY2016-17 per the ESEA Flexibility Waiver. However, in SY2013- 14 the District of Columbia's math proficiency was at 55%, which is slightly lower than the incremental growth goal of 60%. The chart above illustrates the District's current trajectory in math. Similarly, reading proficiency, high school graduation and other ESEA Waiver focus areas mirror the math trajectory of the District of Columbia's students.

OSSE's State System of Support (SSOS), the LEA Support Model, builds upon reform efforts

initiated through the first phase of ESEA Waiver implementation, as well as lessons learned from implementing the School Improvement Grant and RTTT. The SSOS intentionally draws from the successful experiences of other SEAs, such as Rhode Island[2] and Illinois, which have reorganized the way in which they interface with LEAs via the Collaborative Learning for Outcomes (CLO) model. In the LEA Support Model, the SEA is deliberative in providing supports to LEAs based on data. In addition, the SEA fosters collaboration among LEAs and school leaders by providing opportunities for school leaders to connect with one another through learning communities organized by the SEA.

OSSE will utilize a collaborative LEA support framework that includes several key components:

1. *Reorganizing OSSE's Cross-Functional Support Teams*

   Like many state education agencies, one of OSSE's major implementation challenges is aligning efforts across the agency and serving LEAs in a more coordinated manner. This challenge has pushed the agency to re-think its approach to supporting LEAs and to adopt the LEA Support Team model to support new ways of coordinating work across the agency. The LEA Support Team model is a cross-functional teaming model that will ensure that the agency is proactively using data and school progress information to monitor progress and determine interventions.

2. *Providing Foundational Support: The OSSE LEA Support Institutes*

   OSSE has reorganized how it provides foundational training and technical assistance throughout SY 2014-15. Over the course of the year, OSSE has provided training and ongoing support to all LEAs/schools in the District of Columbia based on identified needs and continuous improvement planning efforts via the agency's three LEA support institutes. Occurring in fall, winter, and spring, the institutes feature didactic breakout sessions, communities of practice (CoPs), and peer-based problem solving to facilitate best practice sharing. In SY2014-15, OSSE's institutes were planned in consultation with LEA representative and designed to address key issues faced by LEAs, including: 1) coordination with youth- and family-serving city agencies (held November 2014); 2) the transition to PARCC assessments (held January 2015); and best practice sharing across LEAs (planned for May 2015). Moving forward, OSSE plans to continue to provide such supports to meet LEAs' needs.

3. *Providing Targeted Support: LEA Learning Support Network*

[2]U.S. Department of Education Reform Network, "Collaborative Learning for Outcomes: Connecting LEAs with the Rhode Island Department of Education," website, February 3, 2014, http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/clo-brief.pdf

In SY2014-15, using RtTT funds, OSSE began providing on-site, targeted, data-driven technical assistance to Priority schools targeted for state-level intervention as determined by ESEA Waiver requirements via an intensive support model: the Learning Support Network (LSN). Schools in the LSN began their work by working with an external coach to conduct root-cause analyses of issues and assessing their infrastructure. Subsequently, LEAs developed school plans to implement a range of school improvement strategies. OSSE is evaluating the model through a combination of qualitative and quantitative metrics such as surveys, in-depth interviews, and analysis of student outcome data. Moving forward, OSSE plans to build upon what has proven effective in this model and will continue to use the LSN for schools targeted for state intervention.

4. *Fostering LEA Best Practice Dissemination*

This year, OSSE developed an additional avenue for rewarding best practices and fostering best practice dissemination. Using RtTT and Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (SOAR) funds, OSSE supported active dissemination of best practices to LEAs within the District with a new grant opportunity. The following categories of schools were eligible to apply for the grants:

- Schools with "Reward" status;
- PCSB schools that achieved a score of 50 or more via the PCSB Performance Management Framework; and
- LEAs with schools that have "beaten the odds" and demonstrate strong performance of students typically considered "at-risk".

Grant recipients share work products and collaborate closely with peer schools around promising practices using job-alike consultation and coaching. In addition, participating LEAs will play lead roles in the Spring LEA Institute, either through facilitation of a best practice session, participation on a panel, or through initiation of a Community of Practice.

OSSE intends to build upon what was proven effective in these activities to continue to support the dissemination of best practice across the District of Columbia.

Strengthened Monitoring of Priority and Focus Schools

OSSE is also implementing an outcomes-driven monitoring process to evaluate and support the improvement activities of the District's Priority and Focus schools through its oversight of DCPS and PCSB. By doing so, OSSE believes that the District will show annual academic growth, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps, particularly with regard to students with disabilities and ELLs in Priority schools.

OSSE will conduct progress monitoring reviews three times throughout the year. Reviews will involve a review of school plans, implementation targets, leading indicators, and student outcome data.

Based on these reviews, the agency's leadership team will also determine systemic improvements at the SEA level. Such actions could include:

- Proposing policies that better foster school turnaround (e.g., develop programmatic and financial incentives to encourage actions that drive school turnaround; allocate resources to build LEA capacity for school turnaround);
- Addressing regulatory and procedural redundancies that can distract LEA and school leaders from turnaround work;
- Coordinating efforts related to monitoring to reduce administrative burden; and/or
- Driving cross-agency collaboration with child-serving agencies to better serve children and families, and utilize schools as natural access points for wraparound supports.

OSSE will continue hold bi-annual in-person meetings with leadership from DCPS and PCSB to discuss the progress of Priority and Focus schools. OSSE will continue to implement a framework developed for leading these conversations, structured by clear protocols and standards for evidence. Together, agency leaders will continue to discuss areas of strength, weakness, and corrective actions to be taken to address underperformance.
More information about tiered accountability and support can be found in Sections 2.B, 2.D, 2.E, 2.F and 2.G.

OSSE and PCSB intends to continue to operate under a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") for the purpose of establishing roles and oversight methods for implementing the terms specified by the U.S. Department of Education invitation and guiding principles established by the Department for SEAs requesting ESEA flexibility. This MOU addresses responsibilities of OSSE as the SEA and PCSB as the District public charter school authorizer consistent with Federal and District law and Department guidance. OSSE and PCSB are dedicated to working collaboratively to improve student outcomes.

OSSE will also continue to coordinate with the external partners, including education advocacy groups, community-based organizations, parents, teachers, and school leaders to implement a strong statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support. These entities will also provide assistance to OSSE as appropriate to help identify statewide needs and support implementation including the realignment of federal resources, monitoring progress, and reporting to the public. A more detailed discussion of rewards and supports that are already developed and established with stakeholder input can be found in Section 2.C and 2. F.

As the SEA, OSSE will continue to help build capacity at the LEA and school-level through guidance, technical assistance/support, and opportunities to participate in state-level trainings on: CCSS implementation; root cause analysis; developing and implementing teacher and leader evaluation systems; understanding and using the state-level differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system to inform instruction; and maximizing coordination of

federal resources to serve special populations (Title I, SIG, Title II, Title III, Perkins, and others) and evaluating the impact of interventions.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA provide a plan that ensures that the system will be implemented in LEAs and schools no later than the 2012-2013 school year?*

The revised, differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system became operational over the summer of 2012 as described in the timeline below. The successful enhancements of multiple data systems made it possible for real-time student and school-level information to be analyzed to determine classification of schools and student needs. In addition, the work undertaken as part of RTTT provided a jump start on the interventions and supports necessary for improved school and student academic achievement. The timeline for this plan is below:

- **June 2012** – Data analysis of 2012 DC CAS performance as well as roster confirmation and appeals for 2012 accountability data
- **June 2012** – Communication of updated accountability system and changes in the reporting, intervention, accountability, and recognition system
- **June 2012** - Reporting of school level targets for the 2012-13 school year
- **July 2012** – Reporting of 2012 DC CAS results for AMOs, proficiency, and growth
- **July 2012** – Revision of Title I grant guidelines and application required for schools that do not meet school level targets
- **August 2012** – Identification and distribution of school classifications to the public
- **August 2012** – Inventory and distribution of list of effective external partners and vendors providing services to LEAs
- **August 2012 and beyond –** On-going technical assistance and monitoring as appropriate
- **October 2012** – Improvement plans for focus schools due to OSSE for review and recommendations
- **October 2012** – Revision of school level Title I plans and use of Title I funds to be completed by LEAs and schools that miss the same AMO for two consecutive years
- **January 2013** - Improvement plans for priority schools due to OSSE for review and recommendations
- **January 2013** – Mid-year progress reports due to OSSE from DCPS and PCSB for focus and priority schools
- **June 2013** – Year-end progress reports due to OSSE from DCPS and PCSB for focus and priority schools
- **May 2014**- Improvement plans for priority and focus schools reviewed and feedback provided
- **June 2014**- Improvement plans for priority schools submitted for schools that completed one year of planning
- **September 2014**- LEAs with schools in priority or focus status complete 20% set aside applications for targeted improvement interventions
- **November 2014-** Improvement plans for focus schools submitted for schools that completed 90 day planning period

Summary

A statewide system of recognition, accountability, and support allows OSSE to effectively address the broad spectrum of needs in the District of Columbia. The tiered accountability system envisioned in this application capitalizes on the roles and responsibilities of the SEA, the LEAs, and the charter authorizer for school accountability. Additionally, this system provides flexibility to LEAs and schools with respect to curriculum and programs to promote creative supports that have proven effective in growth and mastery of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) competencies and District–specific academic content standards. Finally, accountability will continue to include a sustained focus on subgroups, particularly English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, ensuring that results are reported for all subgroups. Subgroup performance data will be used to calculate subgroup index scores, which will allow identification of low performing subgroups (as compared to the state subgroup average), and within-school achievement gaps. The combined efforts described in this application are specifically focused improving academic achievement, increasing graduation rates, and achieving mastery in the CCSS, while also avoiding unnecessary and counterproductive burdens on schools.

For additional information, see Attachment 13: Principle 2 Documents

- *DC CAS Performance Overview–Graphs*
- *AEI Journal Article: Choice without Options*
- *Why Is AYP a Poor School Performance Measure–FOCUS*
- *Letter from E. L. Haynes*
- *School Reporting Sample*
- *Article: A Closer Look at DC NAEP Scores*
- *DCPS and PCSB Accountability Systems*
- *OSSE and PCSB Authority*
- *LEA and School-Level Recognition and Rewards*
- *LEA Accountability – Priority and Focus Schools*
- *Special Education – Trainings and Toolkits*

2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

Option A	**Option B**
☐ The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.	X If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must: a. provide the percentage of students in the "all

	students" group that performed at the proficient level on the State's most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA provide the percentage of students in the "all students" group that performed at the proficient level on the State's most recent administration of each additional assessment for all grades assessed?*

During OSSE's conversations with educators, the State Board of Education members, parents, and community leaders, a number of stakeholders expressed concern about focusing solely on ELA and mathematics for assessing student proficiency. In response, the District implemented a plan to include composition and science assessments in the new accountability system.

In 2012, the DC CAS composition assessment was aligned to CCSS for ELA and focused on responses to text for the first time. On the composition assessment, students were asked to analyze and compare contrasting texts, and to respond to questions by applying critical thinking skills, building upon skills taught in ELA and other subjects. OSSE included the pilot composition assessment in the April 2012 DC CAS administration. OSSE used the results of the 2012 assessments to guide professional development in summer and fall 2012. The newly-aligned composition assessment became a part of the accountability system starting with the 2013 test administration, allowing time for LEAs to become familiar with the assessment and to continue curriculum alterations in response to the adoption of the CCSS for statewide assessment.

OSSE is now including composition in the accountability system, to ensure a renewed focus on critical thinking and writing skills, so that students are prepared to compete successfully in colleges and careers. The following chart presents the percentage of the "all students" group proficient in composition.

Table 2.A.ii.1: District of Columbia Composition Proficiency Levels

	2011	2012	2013	2014
State Proficiency Level	33%	47%	51%	50%

DC CAS Composition was integrated into the state accountability system in 2013. As described in Principle 1, in 2015 the DC CAS Composition will be replaced by the writing components of the PARCC ELA Performance-Based Assessment, which includes scaled writing sub-score at each tested grade level and represents an expansion of DC's writing assessment program for grades 3 to 7.

Science assessments are important for promoting a comprehensive, well-rounded curriculum that is not limited to merely ELA and mathematics. By including science in the accountability system, students receive richer instruction across all content areas and become better lifelong learners through integration of mathematics and science skills. Supporting high-quality science instruction bolsters efforts already underway at some LEAs and schools to engage students through hands-on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. The inclusion of science ensures attention to the subject's importance—underscored by President Obama's call to graduate 100,000 more scientists and engineers.

In SY2014-15, OSSE will administer an NGSS-aligned science assessment for grades 5, 8 and high school biology. In Sy2015-16, OSSE will administer a finalized NGSS-aligned test and apply science assessment results to school accountability for the first time. The delayed inclusion of science results in accountability is in response to LEA requests to allow time for more District educators to be involved in the blueprint development, item review, data analysis, and professional development related to teaching to the standards. This timeline will facilitate a positive transition plan for including new subjects while supporting schools and educators through the transition. As with all other assessment development, educators will validate assessment items through content and bias review, and OSSE will provide a blueprint to support schools and teachers in preparing students for the assessment.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA's weighting of the included assessments result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve the State's college- and career-ready standards?*

Outreach and Dissemination

To facilitate the introduction of the composition assessments as part of the new accountability system, OSSE collaborated with DCPS, PCSB, and others to ensure schools, teachers, and students are prepared. Outreach to stakeholders was the first action step in the implementation process. OSSE provided the necessary guidance and direction to its LEAs and schools to prepare students for success in composition. OSSE also leveraged partnerships to be sure stakeholders, especially parents and teachers, have a full understanding of the shift to the CCSS. In preparation for the writing components of the PARCC Assessments, these same stakeholders were consulted and asked to contribute to the design of PARCC, and review the performance-based writing tasks. Professional development for educators around the transition to PARCC advised them that composition would no longer be a standalone assessment, and would instead be integrated into the PARCC ELA exam, and focused on the importance of writing in response to literature and informational texts, as written in the CCSS.

In addition to these partnerships, OSSE is committed to the following in preparation for inclusion of the new NGSS-aligned Science Assessment:

- Continue working with the Assessment stakeholder group and Science leadership team to develop and implement a plan that identifies deliverables focused on supports necessary to teachers, schools, and LEAs to ensure a successful transition;
- Use the results of our review of the alignment between the former science assessments and the NGSS standards, to inform the design of the assessment;
- Provide training and support to LEAs and schools on implementation of science standards in classroom instruction; and
- Provide timely access to science data and supports in understanding results to inform teacher professional development, instruction, and student performance.

Summary

Feedback from focus groups clearly supports the decision to include additional assessments in the accountability plan. OSSE added composition to the accountability plan in 2013, will continue to include composition content under the PARCC, and will add science results in 2016.

These activities support DC's goal to promote student mastery in critical thinking and writing skills. Developing high quality curriculum and instructional strategies that teach core skills necessary in a twenty-first century learning environment and creating aligned assessments can be a lengthy process. Thus, the District of Columbia has continued to phase in new assessments with enough lead time for schools to adjust their curricula. The phase-in approach also provides teachers time to receive the technical assistance, resources and support they need. With improved data on student achievement outcomes, schools will have a greater opportunity to identify those who are on track for college- and career-readiness and those who may need additional help.

2.B Set Ambitious but Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

Option A	Option B	Option C
☒ Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the	☐ Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of	☐ Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but

percentage of students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.	students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.	achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs. ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below. iii. Provide a link to the State's report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in English/Language Arts/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA provide the new AMOs and the method used to set these AMOs? Did the SEA use current proficiency rates from the 2010–2011 school year as the base year? If the SEA set AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, do the AMOs require LEAs, schools, and subgroups that are further behind to make greater rates of annual progress?*

OSSE recognizes the value in the original intent of the NCLB and will build upon it to enhance performance and effectively measure school and student success. As with NCLB, OSSE still expects that 100 percent of students will meet proficiency in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In the proposed new accountability system, OSSE also expects that 100 percent of students will show educational growth each year.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

OSSE will maintain two school-level AMOs:

- A proficiency-based AMO for English/Language Arts (ELA) by subgroup; and
- A proficiency-based AMO for mathematics by subgroup

OSSE will establish AMOs at the state, LEA, school, and subgroup levels based on achieving the goal of reducing the number of non-proficient students by half over a six-year timeframe, using the 2010-11 school year as a baseline. Annual reporting will require schools to describe

achievement outcomes.

Proficiency AMO

The proficiency AMO is established at the state, LEA, school, and subgroup levels with the goal of reducing by half the number of students who are not proficient within six years. Table 2.B.i. below is an example of the state-level subgroup targets in reading and math based on the 2011 assessment scores. OSSE will calculate school-level targets in the same way based on reducing by half the percentage of students who are non-proficient over six years. Based on this logic and methodology, subgroups of students who are not proficient must make greater gains annually to meet the interim targets. Information about schools that fail to meet the AMO targets is found in section 2.F.

Table 2.B.i. State-Level Targets for Proficiency in Reading and Math

	Reading						
Subgroup	**2011 – Baseline**	**2012 Target**	**2013 Target**	**2014 Target**	**2015 Target**	**2016 Target**	**2017 Target**
Asian/Pacific Islanders	71.51 %	73.88 %	76.26 %	78.63 %	81.01 %	83.38 %	85.76 %
Black/Non-Hispanic	41.28 %	46.17 %	51.07 %	55.96 %	60.85 %	65.75 %	70.64 %
Hispanic	47.08 %	51.49 %	55.90 %	60.31 %	64.72 %	69.13 %	73.54 %
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	56.52 %	60.14 %	63.77 %	67.39 %	71.01 %	74.64 %	78.26 %
White/Non-Hispanic	88.26 %	89.24 %	90.22 %	91.20 %	92.17 %	93.15 %	94.13 %
Disabled	15.94 %	22.95 %	29.95 %	36.96 %	43.96 %	50.97 %	57.97 %
LEP/NEP	24.77 %	31.04 %	37.31 %	43.58 %	49.85 %	56.12 %	62.39 %
Econ. Disadvantaged	38.34 %	43.48 %	48.62 %	53.76 %	58.89 %	64.03 %	69.17 %
All Students (State Total)	45.46 %	50.01 %	54.55 %	59.10 %	63.64 %	68.19 %	72.73 %

	Math

Subgroup	2011 - Baseline	2012 Target	2013 Target	2014 Target	2015 Target	2016 Target	2017 Target
Asian/Pacific Islanders	82.02 %	83.52 %	85.02 %	86.52 %	88.01 %	89.51 %	91.01 %
Black/Non-Hispanic	42.05 %	46.88 %	51.71 %	56.54 %	61.37 %	66.20 %	71.03 %
Hispanic	53.07 %	56.98 %	60.89 %	64.80 %	68.71 %	72.62 %	76.54 %
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	60.87 %	64.13 %	67.39 %	70.65 %	73.91 %	77.17 %	80.44 %
White/Non-Hispanic	88.29 %	89.27 %	90.24 %	91.22 %	92.19 %	93.17 %	94.15 %
Disabled	18.87 %	25.63 %	32.39 %	39.15 %	45.91 %	52.67 %	59.44 %
LEP/NEP	35.95 %	41.29 %	46.63 %	51.96 %	57.30 %	62.64 %	67.98 %
Econ. Disadvantaged	40.95 %	45.87 %	50.79 %	55.71 %	60.63 %	65.55 %	70.48 %
All Students (State Total)	47.03 %	51.44 %	55.86 %	60.27 %	64.69 %	69.10 %	73.52 %

SEA Accountability System: Identification and Classification

OSSE's proposed accountability system is based on an index comprised of values calculated based on student growth and proficiency on statewide assessments, assessment participation rates, and adjusted cohort graduation rates.

Calculating Index Values

The cornerstone of the accountability index is the proficiency and growth index value, which is generated at the student level. A student's achievement level in year 1 and year 2 will be compared to Figure 2.B.i to determine how many points to award depending on the achieved level of growth and proficiency.

Figure 2.B.ii. Table Points Awarded for Proficiency and Growth Index Values

Minimum N = 25		Current Score						
Prior Score		Below Basic		Basic			Proficient	Advanced
Level	Group	Low	High	Low	Middle	High	All	All

Below Basic	Low	0	20	40	60	80	100	110
	High	0	0	20	40	60	100	110
Basic	Low	0	0	0	20	40	100	110
	Middle	0	0	0	0	20	100	110
	High	0	0	0	0	0	100	110
Proficient	All	0	0	0	0	0	100	110
Advanced	All	0	0	0	0	0	100	110
No Prior Score		0	0	0	0	0	100	110
Alternate Assessment		0		0			100	110

Proficiency and growth index values will be used to calculate school and subgroup index scores.

Index Score Calculation Business Rules

The school and subgroups index score will be used by OSSE to identify high-performing, high-progress, and struggling schools, and to provide corresponding recognition, support, and monitoring.

Table 2.B.iii. Calculating Index Scores: Methodology

Score	Description	Sample Calculation
School Index Score	The school index score is a weighted average of the value-table points assigned in reading, composition, and mathematics combined. This index identifies priority, reward, developing and rising schools.	(sum of all index scores for all students that are Full Academic Year (FAY)/ number of FAY scores for tested grades and subjects = school index score)
Subgroup Index Scores	To identify focus schools, individual index scores for students within a subgroup, and for each subject, are averaged together to produce subgroup subject index scores.	(sum of subgroup subject index scores for all students that are Full Academic Year (FAY) and belong to subgroup / number of FAY individual index scores that belong to subgroup = subgroup subject index score)

School and Subgroup Index Score

Index values for all full academic year students at each school will be averaged to produce each school's index score. Tested subject values will also be calculated for each subgroup to create subgroup index scores. These subgroup index scores by subject will be used to classify schools as Focus schools. All of these index scores will be used as measures of school progress. Table 2.B.iii below provides an example calculation for a school that has a school index score in ELA of 75 and a school index score in mathematics of 71. The school also has subgroup index scores for ELL ELA of 89 and ELL mathematics of 82.

Table 2.B.iv. Step 2, Subject Index Scores (Example)

	School Index Scores (All Students), by Tested Subject		Subgroup Index Scores, by Tested Subject		
	Student English/Language Arts Index Value	Student Mathematics Index Value	Subgroup: ELL (check if student is ELL)	Student English/Language Arts Index Value for ELL Students	Student Mathematics Index f Value or ELL Students
Student A	100	100	√	100	100
Student B	110	100			
Student C	110	110	√	110	110
Student D	25	50			
Student E	25	50	√	25	50
Student F	100	100			
Student G	25	25			
Student H	25	0			
Student I	100	50	√	100	50
Student J	110	100	√	110	100
Student K	100	100			
Total Index Score	830	785		445	410
Number of	11	11		5	5

Students				
School or Subgroup Index Scores, by Tested Subject	830 / 11 = **75**	785 / 11 = **71**	445 / 5 = **89**	410 / 5 = **82**

Use of Index Scores for School Classification

The school index score will be used to classify the school as Reward, Rising, Developing, and Priority. This score is calculated by combining all index values that a school has earned in all tested subjects and then dividing by the total number of values.

OSSE will also determine subgroups' index scores by subject (as shown in Table 2.B.iii) for the subgroups required to be used for accountability. These subgroup index scores by subject will be used to classify schools as Focus schools based on the achievement gaps. Subsequent sections on Priority and Focus schools discuss how the school and subgroup index scores are used for school classifications.

Minimum *N* Size

Consistent with current practice, OSSE will set the minimum subgroup *N* size for the accountability index and AMO reporting for accountability purposes at 25 but will produce non-accountability reports based on a minimum subgroup *N* size of 10.

Test Participation

The District of Columbia's accountability system will include test participation to ensure that schools are considering the performance of all students. Schools with a participation rate in the state assessment of less than 95 percent for two consecutive years for all students will be classified as Priority schools. Schools that have a test participation rate in the state assessment of less than 95 percent for the same subgroup for two consecutive years will be classified as Focus schools. The participation rate is calculated based on the number of test takers, minus any scores or classrooms invalidated due to test integrity, plus the number of medical exemptions, divided by the number of students enrolled on the first day of testing. In the case of invalidations of assessment scores as a result of test integrity the participation rate for the year in question will be adjusted, which may result in new identification of Focus or Priority schools at the completion of test integrity investigations.

Graduation Rates

To determine the classification based on graduation rates of less than 60% for more than one year for SY2011-12, OSSE will use the rate from 2010 and the adjusted cohort rate from 2011. This mixed methodology is being used since OSSE only has one year of data available for the adjusted graduation rate calculation. Starting with determinations based on the 2012 graduates

for the SY13-14 school year, the adjusted cohort graduation rate will be used for both years to determine whether a school must be classified as priority based on graduation rate. The 2013-14 school year is used here because the graduation rate is a lagging indicator. Final calculations are not available in time for use in accountability determinations for the preceding year. Among other factors described in more detail in section 2.D., a cohort graduation rate of below 60% for two consecutive years or more will classify a school as a Priority school.

Cut Scores and Classification

OSSE proposes a range of cut scores to determine the appropriate classification for each school under the proposed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. The proposed cut scores are established at levels that ensure that the categories for reward, priority, and Focus schools meet the required definitions for performance and progress under ESEA flexibility. The following chart summarizes school classification and cut scores.

Table 2.B.v. OSSE School Classification and Cut Scores

Category	From	To	# of Schools	# of Title I Schools	% of All Schools	% of Title I Schools
Reward	80	100+	30	28	16%	16%
Rising	45	79	78	73	43%	42%
Developing	26	44	18	17	10%	10%
Priority	0	25	30	30	16%	17%
Focus (remaining schools with substantial achievement gaps)	0	100+	27	27	15%	15%
Total			**183**	**175**	**100%**	**100%**

The classification criteria and the order in which the business rules for classification will be applied, is summarized below:

A. From the pool of "all schools," "Priority school" will be the classification for:
   1. Any school with a graduation rate of 60% or below for two or more consecutive years; and
   2. Any school with a school index score of 25 points or below based on insufficient proficiency and growth; **or**
   3. Any school with an all students participation rate of less than 95% for two or more years, even if the school index score is above 25.

B. From the pool of schools not identified as priority pursuant to Step A, "Focus school" will be the classification for:
   1. Any school with a subgroup index score 20 points or more below the state subgroup index score for that subgroup, for each subject. The disproportionate subgroup

performance index is calculated as follows: (statewide subgroup index score in subject – school subgroup index score in subject);

2. Any school with a within-school achievement gap that is among the largest gap between the highest and lowest performing subgroup index scores within a subject. This is calculated by rank ordering schools based on the difference between the highest subgroup index score and the lowest subgroup index score from each subject. Schools are selected from this list based on the largest difference until 10% of the schools in the District have been identified as focus; **or**
3. Any school with subgroup participation rate below 95% for two or more consecutive years in the same subgroup.

C. From the pool of remaining schools that have not been classified as priority or focus pursuant to Steps A and B, "Reward school" will be the classification for:

1. Any school with:
    a. a school index score of 80 or above;
    b. a participation rate of 95% or better;
    c. a graduation rate above 60%;
    d. a prior-year's subgroup four-year Average Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) that is not 20 percentage points or more below the state subgroup prior year ACGR;
2. Any school ranked in the top 5% in annual growth, based on reading and math combined across all content areas, in the all students group

Reward schools with gaps between its highest and lowest performing subgroups in ELA, math or graduation rate that are above 20 percentage points will not retain the Reward status if the gaps do not decrease in the following year.

D. All remaining schools not classified pursuant to Steps A-C will be classified as "Developing/Rising school," which is a single classification with an internal ranking system as either closer to Reward (Rising) or closer to Focus (Developing). Within this classification, schools will be classified as follows.

1. Schools with school index scores between 26-44 are identified as developing schools; **or**
2. Schools with school index scores at or above 45 are identified as rising schools;

Schools that are designated as Priority or Focus using this index-based, state-level accountability system will be required to implement differentiated interventions for subgroups, undergo targeted monitoring, and increased planning and documentation around the use of Title I funds. Priority and Focus schools will also receive intensive and/or targeted support from OSSE, DCPS and PCSB. Further discussion of treatment for Priority schools is found in Section 2.D, and further discussion of treatment for Focus schools is found in Section 2.

E. **LEA- and School-Level Accountability**

LEAs will be held accountable based on the reading and mathematics AMOs by subgroup. AMO targets will be set for each LEA in the same way that AMOs are set for schools—by reducing the

percent of non-proficient students by half over six years, with all students LEA and subgroup specific targets. Each year OSSE will publish the targets and AMOs for each LEA on LEA report cards. LEAs that fail to achieve AMO targets for the same subgroup in the same subject for 2 consecutive years will be held accountable as described in section 2.G.

2.C Reward Schools

2.C.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools. If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA's request identify both highest-performing and high-progress schools as part of its first set of identified reward schools? (Table 2)*
ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools? If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in ESEA Flexibility (but is instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance?*

The accountability system incorporates both performance and progress in one overall school index score. However, within the Reward school classification, schools that are classified as Reward due to high-performance as opposed to those that are classified as Reward due to high progress will be identified. A school will be classified as a *high-performing* Reward school if it achieves a school index score of above 80 and is not currently classified as a Priority or Focus school, or has significant achievement gaps in student achievement or graduation (section 2.B). This annual identification approach will eliminate the possibility of classifying a school as a Reward school while the school exhibits significant achievement gaps or low student graduation rate for multiple years. A school will be classified as a *high-progress* Reward school if it achieves a school index score that is in the top 5% of annual improvement among all schools. This enables recognition of growth in ELA and mathematics for the number of students who have demonstrated growth from year to year.

Table 2.C.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Table 2 is consistent with the definition for Reward schools under the ED's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

Table 2.C.i.1. Compliance with ESEA Flexibility Definitions SY2012-13

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	175
Number of Reward schools identified by OSSE	30

Total number of schools on list generated based on high performance	19
Total number of schools on list generated based on high progress	8[3]

The total number of high-progress schools will be identified based on the 2012 statewide assessment results, which will be validated and finalized in July 2012.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA's list of Reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the recognition and, if applicable, rewards proposed by the SEA for its highest-performing and high-progress schools likely to be considered meaningful by the schools? Has the SEA consulted with LEAs and schools in designing its recognition and, where applicable, rewards?*

SEA Recognition and Rewards

OSSE has consulted with LEAs and schools to design a recognition process that recognizes and rewards highest-performing and high-progress schools in multiple ways. OSSE developed its current Academic Achievement Awards policy, which is aligned with the current ESEA requirements, during SY 2010-11 in consultation with its Title I Committee of Practitioners.

Gold Ribbon School of Excellence Award

OSSE will identify schools eligible to receive a Gold Ribbon School of Excellence in two categories: proficiency and progress. A Reward school may receive both awards in a single year if it meets the criteria for both awards. The types of recognition for schools will include, but will not be limited to:

- Public recognition by the State Board of Education, Deputy Mayor for Education, and/or the Mayor;
- Mayoral proclamation recognizing the school's strong performance; and/or
- Public recognition at a celebration of best practice or participation in a panel/workshop related to educational best practices and/or school improvement strategies.

This year, OSSE developed an additional avenue for rewarding best practices and fostering best practice dissemination. Using RTTT and Scholarship for Opportunity and Results Act (SOAR) grant funds, OSSE supported the active dissemination of best practices to LEAs within the District of Columbia with a new grant opportunity, as described in section 2A.

OSSE intends to build upon what was proven effective in these activities to continue to

[3] Eight is an estimated number; the number of schools identified based on high progress will be confirmed when 2012 data is finalized.

support the dissemination of best practice across the District of Columbia.

Summary
Reward schools will be recognized and rewarded for demonstrated performance and progress. An accountability system that rewards success plays a critical role in supporting all schools to continue to progress.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State's Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State's Title I schools as priority schools? If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in ESEA Flexibility (but is instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance?*

OSSE has proposed a range of cut scores to identify Priority schools based on the required definitions for performance and progress under ESEA flexibility described in Section 2.B. To summarize, Priority school identification criteria includes the following order of operations:

1. Has a graduation rate of 60 percent or less for two consecutive years or more; **or**
2. Has a school index score of 25 or less; **or**
3. Has a participation rate lower than 95 percent in the all students group for two consecutive years.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question -*Did the SEA identify a number of priority schools equal to at least five percent of its Title I schools? Did the SEA's methodology result in the identification of priority schools that are —*

(i) among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the achievement of the "all students" group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, combined, and have demonstrated a lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group;

(ii) Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years; or

(iii) Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program that are using SIG funds to fully implement a school intervention model?

Table 2.D.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Attachment R-2 is consistent with the

definition for Priority schools under the ED's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

Table 2.D.i.1. Compliance with ESEA Flexibility Definitions SY2102-13

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	175
Minimum number of Priority schools required to be identified	9
Number of Priority schools identified by OSSE	30
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are currently Tier I or Tier II SIG schools	3
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60 percent, based on the adjusted cohort graduation rate, over a number of years	1
Total number of schools on list generated based on all students participation rate of less than 95% for two consecutive years	0
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating among the lowest-achieving Title I schools (including the lowest 5%)	26

Because the leaver graduation rate used in 2011 is so much higher than the new adjusted cohort rate used in 2012, few schools are identified as priority based on graduation rate in 2011. Schools are identified and classified based on the order of operations shown above. OSSE's list of Priority schools meets ESEA requirements for the minimum number of schools based on required criteria. However, in the development the final list of Priority schools OSSE received input from stakeholder groups, which resulted in identifying more than the minimum number of schools for support to ensure broader impact and sustained progress. In an effort to ensure continued improvement, OSSE will continue to engage stakeholders and explore whether the relatively large portion of Priority and Focus schools results in the most effective system of differentiated support.

In the SY 2014-15, OSSE will administer a set of new assessments in ELA, Math and Science, and will detach high stakes decisions from the results of this administration, by pausing school classification. For SY 2015-16, OSSE will use the current list of Priority and Focus schools. OSSE will report on a new list of classification following the second administration of the assessments—these new classifications would apply for SY 2016-17.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA's list of priority schools in Table 2.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the identified interventions to be implemented in priority schools likely to*

(i) increase the quality of instruction in priority schools;

(ii) improve the effectiveness of the leadership and the teaching in these schools; and

(iii) improve student achievement and, where applicable, graduation rates for all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students?

(iv) Has the SEA indicated that it will ensure that each of its priority schools implements the selected intervention for at least three years?

OSSE is committed to closing all achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in the District of Columbia graduate from high school and are college- and career-ready at graduation. To reach this goal, Priority schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate student achievement. To support Priority Schools in reaching this goal, OSSE will interface with DCPS and PCSB on the implementation of the turnaround principles in the identified schools. Both DCPS and PCSB have dedicated teams to support struggling schools in this effort. These teams work directly with school leaders to facilitate the changes necessary to accelerate student achievement, by providing tools for LEA and school-based improvement teams to assess their needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps that ensure student learning improves in each Priority school. In collaboration with DCPS, PCSB, the Deputy Mayor of Education's Office, SBOE, and other partners, OSSE will enhance the effectiveness and coherence of district systems and the effective integration of external partners to support school improvement.

In addition, OSSE will evaluate, support, and monitor schools through its oversight of DCPS and PCSB, around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital, and financial/asset management. By doing so, OSSE believes that the District of Columbia students will show annual academic growth, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps, particularly with regard to students with special needs and ELLs in Priority schools.

SEA Support

OSSE will use LEA Support Teams staffed by various DC OSSE personnel from multiple divisions to support the effective implementation of turnaround efforts in each Priority school. Each LEA Support Team will be structured to focus on a cohort of LEAs within the District. LEA Support Teams will meet to review LEA- and school-specific information and advise OSSE on ways to help coordinate schools continues improvement efforts. LEA Support Team activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing each LEA's Title I 20 percent reservation set aside application dedicated to implementing interventions in Priority and Focus schools. LEA Support teams would work to ensure that each LEA's planned expenditures target areas of identified need, that alignment exists between the planned expenditures and the primary seven turnaround principles, and that a research base exists that demonstrates the appropriateness of the interventions;
- Reviewing Priority and Focus schools' school improvement plans. LEA Support Teams will advise OSSE leadership in order to better support each school's turnaround efforts; and
- Participating in training to build the agency's capacity to support schools effectively.

Such training could include training on the primary seven turnaround principles, effective strategies for understanding school data and outcomes, and supports for special populations of students.

Resources developed by OSSE and used in Priority school interventions will include CCSS curriculum and assessments, professional development supporting improved instruction, data systems for improving teaching and learning, guidelines for identifying quality enhanced and extended learning opportunities, and innovative strategies to support special education students, ELLs, and under-performing students.

Since most of the District of Columbia schools are subject to ESEA, LEAs will have to incorporate the priority schools' individualized improvement plan in a web-based tool such as Indistar (a system that enables continuous planning, implementation, monitoring, and course adjustment that provides OSSE senior staff the ability to continually track implementation and make tailored recommendations to achieve desired results in student learning).

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the interventions that the SEA described aligned with the turnaround principles and are they likely to result in dramatic, systemic change in priority schools? Do the SEA's interventions include all of the following?*

- *(i) providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;*
- *(ii) ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;*
- *(iii) redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;*
- *(iv) strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;*
- *(v) using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;*
- *(vi) establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and*
- *(vii) providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement?*

Priority schools will be required to implement all seven turnaround principles using intervention strategies that are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress. The identified needs, specific interventions, and progress-monitoring goals will be included in individualized school improvement plans developed for each Priority school and approved by DCPS or PCSB, as the charter authorizer. OSSE will review plans and make recommendations as needed; at the same time, OSSE will monitor the effectiveness of DCPS's and PCSB's efforts using a common set of expectations.

Although all interventions will be implemented concurrently in Priority schools, the interventions themselves are listed separately along with a set of strategies and expected outcomes so that the approach is clearly outlined and the effectiveness goals can be measured accordingly.

School Leadership

The Priority school must develop a plan to implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Evaluate, in-depth, the performance of the current leadership;
- Implement changes in leadership, where appropriate;
- Focus on instructional leadership including the collection of data and feedback mechanisms for continually improving instruction;
- Partner with a Reward school or obtain a leadership mentor to analyze existing leadership models and develop a revised leadership plan;
- Provide flexibility in the areas of scheduling, budget, staffing, and curriculum; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will monitor DCPS and PCSB and ensure that Priority schools are led by principals who are capable of leading for improvement and implementing the turnaround principles successfully and effectively. DCPS and PCSB will submit to OSSE evidence on their process to ensure that each principal of a Priority school holds the competencies necessary to achieve school turnaround. This evidence must be submitted for each Priority school prior to the beginning of its first implementation year. OSSE will provide the guidance for submission of such evidence. DCPS's and PCSB will be monitored by OSSE on their oversight of intervention strategies that address school leadership. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional leadership behaviors of the principal, and the school and classroom-level achievement, as well as the quality of the improvement plan and implementation. Effectiveness will ultimately be measured by improved student achievement on state-level assessments.

Effective Staffing Practices and Instruction

The Priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Review and retain effective staff that have the ability to be effective in a turnaround effort;
- Develop a recruitment plan that screens out ineffective teachers from transferring into these schools;
- Ensure that all administrators in the school have the skills to effectively evaluate instruction and give quality feedback to teachers;
- Develop an overall recruitment and retention plan for the principal and leadership team;
- Provide additional instruction time for all teachers focused on effective instruction;
- Partner with outside master educators to conduct observations as part of a

comprehensive evaluation process that supports reliable observations; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by DCPS and PCSB to increase the recruitment, retention, and development of effective teachers and principals. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instruction (walkthrough data, formal/informal observations), the teacher evaluation system, and improved student achievement as measured by state-level assessment.

Effective Use of Time

The Priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Increase instructional time for students who need more time to meet the rigorous goals of the CCSS;
- Provide additional time focused on learning strategies for effectively working with students with disabilities or ELLs;
- Provide additional time focused on teachers developing and using common assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction;
- Focus on effective use of instructional time, including effective transitions and teacher collaborations; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

While the form of these interventions may include extended learning time during the school day, it may also include extended learning opportunities in the form of either before-school or after-school programs consistent with the CCSS. OSSE may partner with organizations (either for-profit or not-for-profit) and school-based entities to identify best practices and strategies for effective extended learning opportunities. To implement appropriate before-school or after-school tutoring or related supports, the school may provide these services directly or contract with an appropriate provider organization (either for-profit or not-for-profit) or school-based entity.

OSSE will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by DCPS and PCSB that address use of time. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instruction for all students (walkthrough data, formal/informal observations), classroom-level assessment data for all students, and student achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

The Priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Implement the CCSS and aligned model curriculum and unit assessments;
- Implement research-based interventions for all students two or more grade levels behind in ELA or mathematics; or

- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by DCPS and PCSB to prepare all students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and low-performing students, to be college and career-ready. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional data (walkthroughs, formal/informal observations), curriculum implementation data (walkthroughs, formal/informal observations), classroom-level assessment data, intervention implementation and achievement data, and improved student achievement measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Use of Data

The Priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Use data to inform instruction including, where appropriate, the placement of a full-time data specialist in the school focused on implementing a system for teachers to develop and use common assessment data funded by school-level Title I funds;
- Provide time for collaboration on the use of data to inform instruction;
- Use formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction;
- Build the principal's capacity to collect and analyze data for improving instruction and the skills necessary to develop a schedule and system for increasing teacher ownership of data analysis for improving instruction;
- Develop or expand data collection systems to allow for customized, real-time data analysis; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by DCPS and PCSB to increase the effective use of data to improve instruction. The effectiveness of this intervention will be measured by an increase in the numbers of teachers using data to inform and differentiate instruction as well as improved student achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

School Climate and Culture

The Priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Place, where appropriate, a climate and culture specialist in the school funded with school-level Title I funds to work with the leadership, staff, and families to develop or adopt a plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations;
- Address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs by way of additional counseling, access to additional ancillary services, or other supports;
- Build capacity for all staff and leadership to implement a comprehensive plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations;

- Use relevant data and to inform appropriate actions for continually improving the climate and culture of the school; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by DCPS and PCSB to support the development of a safe and healthy learning environment capable of meeting students' social, emotional, and health needs. The effectiveness of these interventions will be monitored in part using attendance and discipline disaggregated data as well as climate survey responses from students, parents, and staff. Effectiveness will ultimately be measured by improved student achievement on school and state-level assessments.

Effective Family and Community Engagement

The Priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Develop or expand functions of family and community engagement staff to focus engagement on academics;
- Build capacity for family and community engagement staff designed to increase their skill level in developing academically focused engagement opportunities for families and the community;
- Build capacity around development and implementation of effective, academically-focused family and community engagement, particularly for students with disabilities and ELLs and their families; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by DCPS and PCSB to increase the engagement of families and the community. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by the change in the number of family and community engagement opportunities, including academically-focused activities, as well as improvement on key indicators of the school climate survey. In addition, effectiveness will be measured by student achievement in state-level assessments. Finally, OSSE will also monitor the extent to which DCPS and PCSB are accomplishing the implementation of the interventions aligned to the turnaround principles.
In addition to the turnaround principles described above, DCPS and PSCB may select one of four additional SIG-developed turnaround models (see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/2010-27313.pdf) after a one-year planning period in each Priority school. The four additional SIG models are as follows:

1. Turnaround: Replace the principal, rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff, and grant the new principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
2. Restart: Convert the school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization selected

through a rigorous review process.

3. Closure: Close the school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
4. Transformation: Replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, institute comprehensive instructional reforms, increase learning time, create community-oriented schools, and provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Schools identified by OSSE as Priority schools will have one year to plan for implementation of selected model and interventions. This time frame will allow for sufficient collaboration between LEAs, schools, parents, and the school community.

Per ESEA flexibility request requirements for Priority schools, OSSE will require the development of a three-year improvement plan from DCPS and PCSB for each school identified as a Priority school. To assist the school and LEA in development of the plan, a school-level needs assessment or quality school review will be conducted in each Priority school by a visiting review team led by DCPS Office of School Turnaround (for DCPS schools) or PCSB (for public charter schools). Improvement plans for Priority schools must incorporate an improvement plan that includes strategies and interventions addressing all seven turnaround principles or one of four additional SIG models.

Each improvement plan will include annual performance targets set by DCPS and PCSB, in consultation with schools and parents, focusing on the more important aspects of each school's individual improvement plan. These ambitious and achievable performance metrics will be tailored to each school based on its data and needs assessment. Upon submission of the LEA improvement plan and performance targets for each school, OSSE will review and make recommendations as needed. OSSE will also approve the use of the LEA's 20 percent set-aside portion of its Title I funds to fund school improvement plans for targeted schools.

LEAs will be allowed to use the LEA's 20 percent set-aside portion of their Title I allocations s to support data management and reporting for the purposes of school improvement reporting. DCPS and PCSB (on behalf of charter schools) will submit to OSSE both mid-year and end-of-year reports on the implementation progress of each Priority school so that OSSE can provide guidance and recommendations to ensure improvement. Mid-year reports from DCPS and PCSB will be due January 31 of each year, and end-of-year reports will be due June 30 of each year. In cases where the LEA received certain school classifications after October 30, the mid-year report for the schools that were classified late will be due 90 days from the time that the official classification was sent to the LEA. This reporting will support OSSE's oversight of the statewide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system.

When PCSB provides official notice to OSSE that its members have voted to dissolve the charter of a particular Priority school based on lack of progress towards improved student academic outcomes, or other significant issues cited by PCSB, PCSB will not be responsible for the

monitoring activities required for Priority schools (such as submitting and monitoring a school improvement plan) with two exceptions:

- If for some reason, the school did not cease operating at the end of the school year in which the charter revocation decision was made, OSSE will consider the charter LEA fully operational and will apply the same requirements for schools in Priority status as long as the LEA continues to receive federal and local funding.
- If the school is already in the "state intervention" year (see below) at the time of PCSB's decision, OSSE may decide to continue to provide technical assistance to the school to provide continuity of support until it ceases operating.

PCSB will have 30 days from the dissolution decision to submit to OSSE its closure plan to (a) ensure continuity of quality educational services prior to the school's closing; and (b) seek to arrange quality educational alternatives in the coming school year for students in the closing school. The plan would have to adhere to OSSE's minimum standards for closure. Any change to the minimum standards will be considered by OSSE and PCSB jointly.

SEA Monitoring

During the school's first year of implementation, and for each year thereafter until the school exits Priority status, OSSE will monitor DCPS and PCSB on implementation progress for each identified school. As part of its monitoring of DCPS and PCSB, OSSE will conduct quarterly progress reviews of Priority and Focus schools to track school implementation progress, identify areas where implementation can be improved, and provide support. Twice per year OSSE will convene with DCPS and PCSB leadership for an in-person meeting where together, agency leaders will discuss areas of strength and challenge, and determine necessary corrective actions to address underperformance. Throughout the school year, OSSE will also provide training and technical assistance to support LEAs/schools in the District of Columbia based on identified needs and continuous improvement planning efforts. OSSE will also convene LEA Support Institutes to allow for peer-based problem-solving and facilitate best practice sharing, and provide targeted, data-driven technical assistance-particularly to Priority and Focus schools.

Meaningful Consequences

To ensure meaningful consequences are implemented for Priority schools that do not make progress after full implementation of interventions, OSSE will hold DCPS and PCSB, as the charter authorizer, accountable for making significant progress towards improving achievement and narrowing achievement gaps in each school under their jurisdiction. (see Table below). DCPS and PCSB have the primary responsibility for developing and implementing an improvement plan in each school identified as Priority. During the first three years of being in priority status, OSSE will review the DCPS and PCSB improvement plans and make recommendations that take into account the advice of the LEA Support Teams as needed. The DCPS and charter LEAs will be required to reserve 20 percent of Title I funds for school-level interventions and supports for Priority and Focus schools as described throughout Principle 2.

SEA Intervention

If a Priority school fails to meet the exit criteria within three years since identification, OSSE

will assume approval authority of the improvement plans submitted by DCPS and PCSB for Priority schools in the following school year. However, schools that have met the exit criteria in the two implementation years would get one more year to exit Priority status before OSSE intervenes.

In addition to approving the school improvement plan as a component of the state intervention, OSSE may adjust interventions including, but not limited to, the following: a restriction of flexibility in the use of Title I funds; the requirement that Title I plans address activities that have a greater likelihood of school improvement, such as hiring a school improvement coach and forming partnerships with external organizations with evidence of effectiveness in the area of school improvement; and the implementation of other SIG requirements, such as using the Indistar tool, found at www.centerii.org/SchoolRestructuring/login.aspx, to manage the school improvement plan and activities. Indistar is the District of Columbia's online continuous school improvement planning and monitoring tool developed by the Center on Innovation and Improvement. It allows schools to assess their implementation of indicators of effective practice, select priority objectives aligned to those indicators, plan action steps to address deficiencies related to those objectives, implement those action steps, and evaluate progress.

In order to ensure increased rigor of interventions and supports in Priority schools that have not made sufficient progress to exit Priority status, OSSE established the Learning Support Network (LSN).

In SY 2014-15 through RtTT, OSSE began providing on-site, targeted, data-driven technical assistance to Priority schools targeted for OSSE intervention as determined by ESEA waiver requirements via the LSN.

LEAs in the LSN begin their improvement work by conducting root-cause analyses of LEA issues and assessing their infrastructure. Since then, schools have worked to develop and carry out plans to implement a range of school improvement strategies. Moving forward, OSSE plans to build upon what has proven effective in this model and will continue to use the Learning Support Network for schools targeted as needing intervention.

If a Priority school does not meet the exit criteria for three out of five years, OSSE will assess the school's likelihood of future progress and make a recommendation for closure or alternative governance.

Summary

Using OSSE school accountability index, Priority schools—evidenced by low growth, low achievement, and/or low graduation rates for all students—will require support to implement their program with fidelity. OSSE expects that through intensive intervention and supports more students will be ready for college and careers. To reach this goal, Priority schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate achievement for all students, including

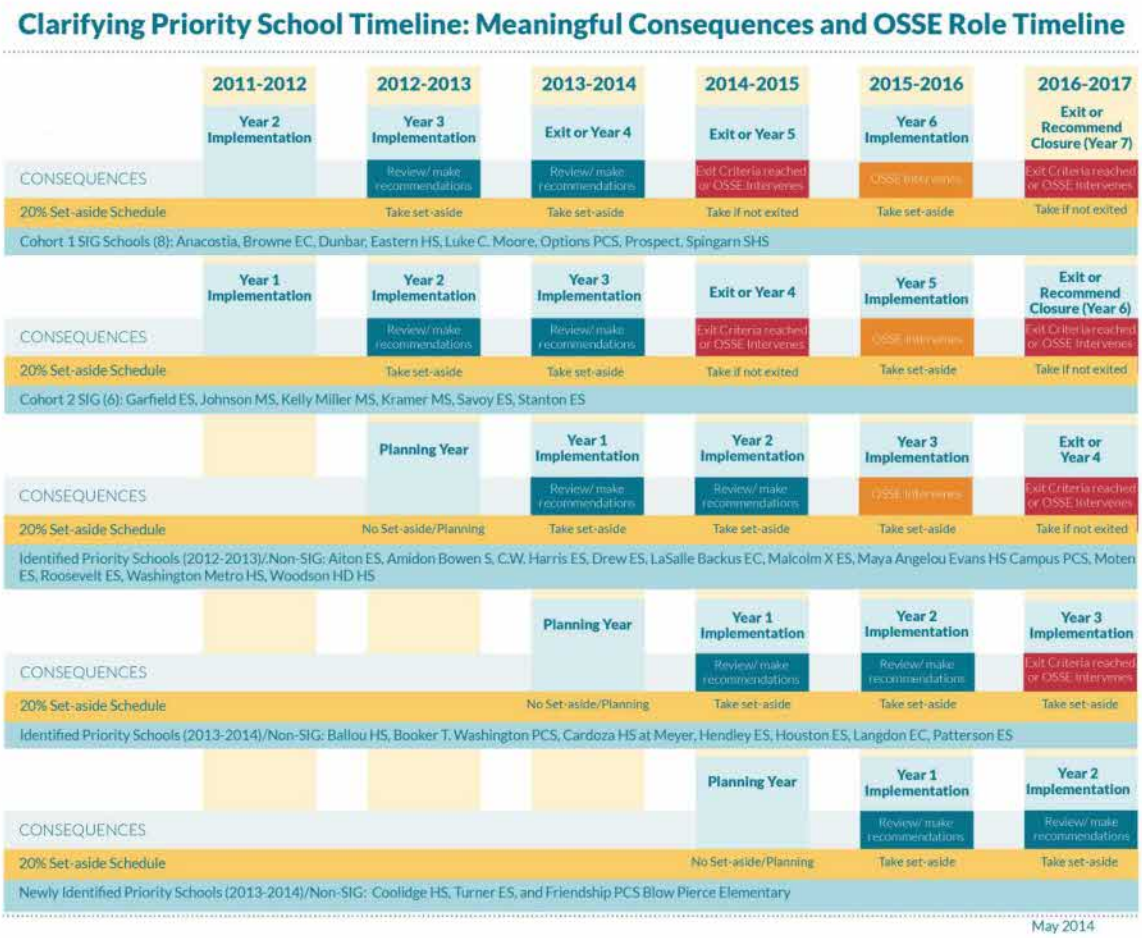
students with disabilities and ELLs. OSSE will partner with DCPS and PCSB to provide LEAs and school-based improvement teams the information and resources necessary to assess their needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps to ensure that student learning improves in each Priority school.

2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that it's LEAs that have one or more Priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each Priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA's choice of timeline.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA's proposed timeline distribute Priority schools' implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in a balanced way, such that there is not a concentration of these schools in the later years of the timeline?*

All Priority schools that were previously identified as persistently lowest-achieving schools and that are implementing SIG have already begun implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles and have completed their three-year SIG interventions by the end of the SY 2012–13 or 2013–14. Schools are required to implement the interventions for the entire length of the three-year grant period. Having learned the importance of an extended planning period, OSSE will require all newly-identified priority schools to spend one school year planning for the implementation of meaningful interventions that meet the turnaround principles. Schools listed in 2.D.ii that were not previously identified as persistently lowest-achieving schools initiated this planning in SY 2012–13 and began implementation of the selected model by the beginning of SY 2013–14. This means that all 2012-13 identified Priority schools were in year two of a three-year intervention model by SY 2014–15.

Figure 2.D.iv.1. SIG and Priority Cohorts Timeline 2011 to 2016–17



This timeline aggressively targets persistently low-performing schools for intensive intervention and support by identifying schools beyond the minimum number of schools the SEA is required to identify at this time. This timeline also provides sufficient time for planning by schools, LEAs, and OSSE to ensure full, effective implementation that will lead to dramatic increases in student achievement within newly identified Priority schools.

2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA provide criteria to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status? Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit priority status have made significant progress in improving student achievement? Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit priority status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?*

Once a school is identified as a Priority school, it will remain in the priority classification for a minimum of three years, and will be required to implement the seven primary turnaround principles within that three-year period of time. To exit Priority status, a school must demonstrate significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing

achievement gaps by meeting all of the following targets for three years, not necessarily consecutive years, within a five-year period:

- School Index Score: Exceed a school index score of 30;
- 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate: Exceed 60 percent; **and**
- Test participation: Exceed 95 percent participation for the "all students" subgroup.

At the end of each school year during the three-year implementation period, OSSE will determine whether each Priority school has made significant progress in each of these three areas and will make a summary determination of whether the school is on track to exit Priority status.

If a Priority school meets the exit criteria in the first three years after its initial identification, , then the school will exit Priority status at the end of this three-year period. If, however, a school does not meet the exit criteria at the end of any year since its initial identification, it will be required to adjust its plan and add additional years to its overall intervention timeline until the exit criteria is achieved for three full years within a five-year period. The chart below shows several examples of exit timelines for Priority schools; "Y" indicates that sufficient progress was made, "N" indicates that sufficient progress was not made, and "Exit" indicates that the school exited priority status at the beginning of the school year.

Figure 2.D.iv.2. Priority Schools and State Intervention Timeline

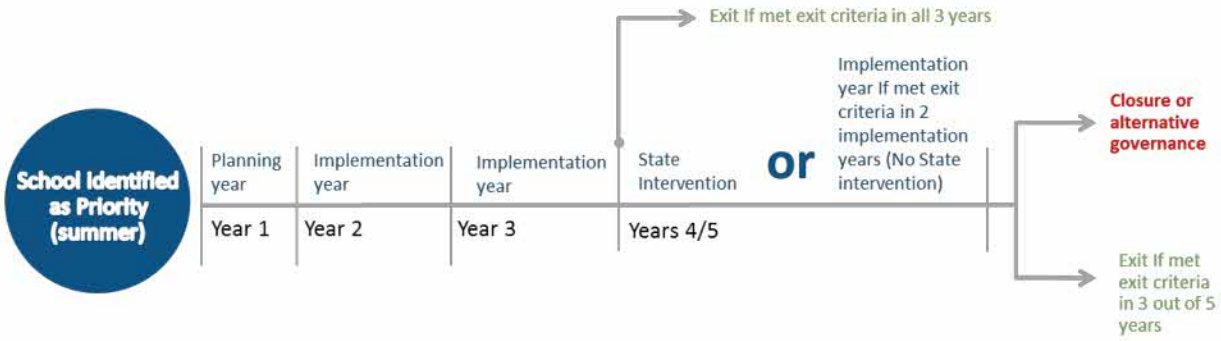


Table 2.D.v.1. Exit Timeline for Priority schools (Example)

Priority School Timeline- 5 School Scenarios		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
School A	**School Activity**	Planning	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation & OSSE Intervention
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	OTA	RTA
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	N	Y	N	Y
School B	**School Activity**	Planning	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation & OSSE Intervention
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	OTA	RTA
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	N	N	N	Y
School C	**School Activity**	Planning	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation & OSSE Intervention
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	OTA	RTA
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	Y	N	Y	Y
School D	**School Activity**	Planning	Implementation	Implementation	Exit
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	N/A
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	OTA	N/A
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	N/A
School E	**School Activity**	Planning	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	OTA	OTA
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	N	Y	Y	Y

Key: Mon= Waiver monitoring for schools | RTA= Required technical assistance for schools | OTA= Optional technical assistance for schools

Schools that were already classified as "Priority" during the first year of administering a new state assessment, where the Department has approved a one-year pause of school classifications, will need two years of meeting the School Index Score exit criteria to exit status. This would not apply to schools that already met the criteria for two years, and would have exited Priority status as a result. These schools will need to demonstrate that they have met criteria once the new assessment is incorporated into the accountability system.

In the case where a school implemented the Restart or Closure SIG models (see page 97), schools will also be able to exit Priority based on one year of meeting the exit criteria instead of three, so long as the school meets the following two conditions:

1. The school was in Priority status for at least three years.
2. The school met exit criteria for every year of which it had a School Index Score or graduation rate following the implementation of the model.

These criteria ensure that the lowest-performing schools in the District of Columbia are held to high standards for fully and effectively implementing selected intervention models and that student achievement improves significantly over time. Three full years of meeting the exit criteria indicates that the school has built a sustainable foundation for academic achievement that justifies an exit from priority status.

2. E FOCUS SCHOOLS

2.E.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools as "Focus schools." If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of Focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools as focus schools? If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in ESEA Flexibility (but is instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance?*

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA's methodology for identifying focus schools educationally sound and likely to ensure that schools are accountable for the performance of subgroups of students?*

Under its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, OSSE will identify Focus schools based on the performance of subgroups, both internally as compared to other student groups, and externally as compared to the state average. This approach ensures that the category of Focus schools meets the required definitions for performance and progress under ESEA flexibility.

Schools that meet any of the following criteria, and have not already been classified as Priority schools, will be classified as Focus schools:

1. **Disproportionate Subgroup Performance**: Has a subgroup that performs disproportionately lower than the state average in any tested subject. The threshold for this category is a school subgroup index score 20 points or more below the state subgroup index score. The disproportionate subgroup index score is calculated as follows: (statewide subgroup index score in subject – school subgroup index score in subject); **or**
2. **Within-School Achievement Gaps:** Has the largest gap between the highest and lowest performing subgroup index scores within a subject. This is calculated by rank ordering schools based on the difference between the highest subgroup index score and the lowest subgroup index score from each tested subject. Schools are selected from this list based on the largest difference until 10 percent of the schools in the District of Columbia have been identified as Focus schools; **or**
3. **Participation Rate:** Has a subgroup with a participation rate lower than 95 percent for two consecutive years.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA identify a number of focus schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools? Did the SEA's methodology result in the identification of focus schools that have —*

(i) *the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup or subgroups and the lowest-achieving subgroup or subgroups or, at the high school level, the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate; or*

(ii) *a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate?*

Table 2.E.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Attachment R-2 is consistent with the definition for Focus schools, as identified above, under the ED's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

Table 2.E.i.1 Compliance with ESEA Flexibility Definitions for Focus schools SY2012-13

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	175
Minimum number of Focus schools required to be identified	18
Number of Focus schools identified by OSSE	27
Total number of schools on list generated that have had a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years	0
Total number of schools on list generated that have greatest within-school gaps (Within-School Achievement Gaps)	0
Total number of schools on list generated based on all students participation rate of less than 95 percent for two consecutive years	0
Total number of schools on list generated that have a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement (Disproportionate Subgroup Performance) or at the high school level low graduation rates	27

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA identify as focus schools all Title I-participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years that are not identified as priority schools?*

There are no schools identified as focus based on the graduation rate because schools with a graduation rate lower than 60 percent for two or more consecutive years will always be identified as Priority schools in D.C.

2. E.ii Provide the SEA's list of focus schools in Table 2.

2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the SEA's focus schools and their students and provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Has the SEA demonstrated that the interventions it has identified are effective at increasing student achievement in schools with similar characteristics, needs, and challenges as the schools the SEA has identified as focus schools? Has the SEA identified interventions that are appropriate for different levels of schools (elementary, middle, high) and that address different types of school needs (e.g., all students, targeted at the lowest-achieving students)?*

As part of its statewide network of tiered support, OSSE will collaborate and coordinate with

DCPS and PCSB in the process for supporting schools. Schools identified by OSSE as Focus schools will be notified of the reason they were classified as "focus" (whether it's within school achievement gaps, disproportionate underperforming subgroup or low subgroup test participation rate), and be required to plan for selected models and interventions accordingly. Schools will begin implementation of interventions and supports no later than 90 days after the start of the school year. If for some reason, classifications were delayed and LEAs did not receive official notice by October 30, the LEA would have 90 days from the time of the classification to begin implementation. This will allow for sufficient collaborations among LEAs, schools, parents, and the school community, which have requested that OSSE have a clearer oversight role.

OSSE will require DCPS and PCSB to develop a two-year improvement plan for each focus school. To assist in the development process, a school-level needs assessment or quality school review will be conducted in each focus school by a visiting review team led by the DCPS Office of School Turnaround (for DCPS schools) or PCSB (for public charter schools). Information gathered from the needs assessment will inform the selection of the targeted interventions and the school's two-year plan.

The identified needs, specific interventions, and progress-monitoring goals will be included in individualized school improvement plans developed for each focus school and approved by DCPS or PCSB, as the charter authorizer, taking into account that schools have different quantities and qualities of need. OSSE will review plans and make recommendations as needed; at the same time, OSSE will monitor the effectiveness of DCPS's and PCSB's work using a common set of expectations. In addition, OSSE will evaluate, support, and monitor school effectiveness through DCPS and PCSB around (a) instructional leadership, (b) curriculum, (c) professional development, (d) instruction, (e) assessments, (f) staff evaluation, (g) human capital and (h) financial/asset management.

OSSE will use the LEA Support Teams as explained in Section 2.A in an advisory role to support effective implementation of meaningful interventions in each focus school . LEAs will have to incorporate the focus schools' individualized improvement plan in a Web-based tool such as Indistar (a system that enables continuous planning, implementation, monitoring, and course adjustment that empowers OSSE senior staff to make recommendations about changes in practice to achieve desired results in student learning).

To ensure that OSSE can provide effective guidance and support to LEAs and schools, each improvement plan will include annual performance targets set by DCPS and PCSB, in consultation with schools and parents, focusing on the aspects of each school's individual improvement plan. These ambitious and achievable performance metrics will be tailored to each school based on its data and needs assessment, and will be used by OSSE in its guidance, support, and monitoring of DCPS and PCSB. DCPS and LEAs will be allowed to use the LEA's 20 percent set-aside portion of their Title I allocations to support data management and reporting for the purposes of school improvement reporting. DCPS and PCSB will submit mid-year and

end-of-year progress reports to OSSE so that OSSE can provide guidance and recommendations to the LEA and school. Mid-year reports from DCPS and PCSB will be due January 31 of each year, and end-of-year reports will be due June 30 of each year. This reporting will support OSSE's oversight of school improvement. In cases where the LEA received certain school classifications after October 30, the mid-year report for the schools that were classified late will be due 90 days from the time that the official classification was sent to the LEA.

Upon submission of the LEA improvement plan and performance targets for each school, OSSE will review and make recommendations as needed. It will also approve the use of the LEA's 20 percent set-aside portion of its Title I funds towards school improvement plans for targeted schools.

Differentiated Interventions for Subgroups

Focus schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of students based on subgroup performance will be required to implement intervention strategies similar to those research-based differentiated interventions discussed in section 2.D, but which are explicitly focused on the subgroups that placed the school in focus status. School leaders, DCPS, and PCSB will determine specific interventions to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs in Focus schools.

Focus schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of students with disabilities must include one or more of the following targeted intervention strategies:

- Align the curriculum to the CCSS;
- Increase collaboration among teachers;
- Improve use of data for differentiating instruction;
- Build capacity for all teachers, particularly for special education teachers to better understand the rigor of the CCSS; or
- Other promising strategies that differentiate interventions and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

Focus schools identified as not meeting the needs of ELLs must include one or more of the following targeted intervention strategies that:

- Include research-based language acquisition strategies for teaching academic English;
- Improve the use of native language support;
- Scaffold learning to meet the rigorous requirements of the CCSS and English Language Development (ELD) standards;
- Build capacity for all teachers to learn language acquisition strategies for meeting the content learning needs of ELLs and to better understand the rigorous requirements of the CCSS and ELD standards; and/or
- Other promising strategies that differentiate interventions and are sufficient to achieve

change and demonstrate progress.

To address the needs of other subgroups of students, the improvement plan must include one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Build capacity for school leaders focused on instructional leadership including the collection of data and feedback mechanisms for continually improving instruction;
- Provide time for collaboration on the use of data to inform instruction;
- Use formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction;
- Address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs by way of additional counseling, access to additional ancillary services, or other supports;
- Build capacity for all staff on the effective support of students with disabilities and ELLs and their families;
- Build capacity for all staff on the development and implementation of effective, academically-focused family and community engagement;
- Extend learning time before, during, and after school that is aligned to CCSS; or
- Other promising strategies that address the areas of deficiency that placed the school in focus status and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

OSSE will regularly monitor DCPS and PCSB in the implementation and impact of interventions strategies to ensure that all schools are making progress toward increasing student achievement.

SEA Monitoring

Similar to what was described for priority schools, during each Focus school's first year of implementation, and for each year thereafter until the school exits status, OSSE will monitor the DCPS and PCSB on implementation progress for each identified school. As part of its monitoring of DCPS and PCSB, OSSE will conduct quarterly progress reviews of priority and focus schools to track school implementation progress, identify areas where implementation can be improved, and to identify opportunities for OSSE to provide support. Twice per year OSSE will convene with DCPS and PCSB leadership for an in-person meeting where together, agency leaders will discuss areas of strength, challenge, and corrective actions to be taken to address underperformance. Throughout the school year, OSSE will also provide training and technical assistance to support LEAs/schools in the District of Columbia based on identified needs and continuous improvement planning efforts. OSSE will also convene LEA Support Institutes to (a) encourage peer-based problem-solving; (b) facilitate best practice sharing; and (c) provide targeted, data-driven technical assistance to priority and focus schools in particular.

When PCSB provides official notice to OSSE that its members have voted to dissolve the charter of a particular Focus school based on lack of progress towards improved student academic outcomes, or other significant issues cited by PCSB, PCSB will not be responsible for the

monitoring activities required for Focus schools (such as submitting and monitoring a school improvement plan) with two exceptions:

- If for some reason, the school did not cease operating at the end of the school year in which the charter revocation decision was made, OSSE will consider the charter LEA fully operational and will apply the same requirements for schools in Focus status as long as the LEA continues to receive federal and local funding.
- If the school is already in the "state intervention" year (see below) at the time of PCSB's decision, OSSE may decide to continue to provide technical assistance to the school to provide continuity of support until it ceases operating.

PCSB will have 30 days from the dissolution decision to submit to OSSE its closure plan to (a) ensure continuity of quality educational services prior to the school's closing; and (b) seek to arrange quality educational alternatives in the coming school year for students in the closing school. The plan would have to adhere to OSSE's minimum standards for closure. Any change to the minimum standards will be considered by OSSE and PCSB jointly.

Meaningful Consequences

To ensure meaningful consequences are implemented for Focus schools that do not make progress, OSSE will hold DCPS and PCSB, accountable for ensuring schools make significant progress in improving achievement and narrowing achievement gaps in each school under their jurisdiction (see Table 2.E.iii.1).

Similar to the model for priority schools, DCPS and PCSB have the primary responsibility of developing and implementing an intervention and support plan for schools identified as focus. During the first two years of being in focus status, OSSE will review DCPS and PCSB intervention and supports plans and make recommendations that take into account the advice of LEA Support Teams as needed. A reservation of 20 percent of the total Title I allocation will be required at the LEA level for school interventions and supports. OSSE will monitor these funds to ensure they are linked to effective strategies that are tied to the reasons for identification.

If a Focus school fails to meet the exit criteria after two full years of implementation, OSSE will assume approval authority of the school-level plans for interventions and supports. DCPS and PCSB will make adjustments to interventions including, but not limited to, the following: (a) a restriction of the flexibility in the use of Title I funds; (b) the suggested redirecting of Title I funds to activities that have a greater likelihood of school improvement, such as hiring a school improvement coach; (c) forming partnerships with external organizations with evidence of effectiveness in the area of school improvement; and (d) the implementation of other SIG requirements such as using the Indistar tool, or a comparable tool to manage the school improvement plan and activities.

As described in section 2.D., OSSE established the Learning Support Network and began providing on-site, targeted, data-driven technical assistance to Priority schools identified for

intervention as determined by ESEA waiver requirements and IDEA metrics via the Learning Support Network. Moving forward, OSSE plans to build upon what has proven effective in this model and will continue to use the Learning Support Network for Focus schools targeted as needing intervention.

If a school that was identified as a Focus school remains a Focus school for a fourth year, OSSE will assess the school's likelihood of future progress and evaluate whether to recommend for closure or alternative governance.

Figure 2.E.iii.1: Focus School and State Intervention Timeline

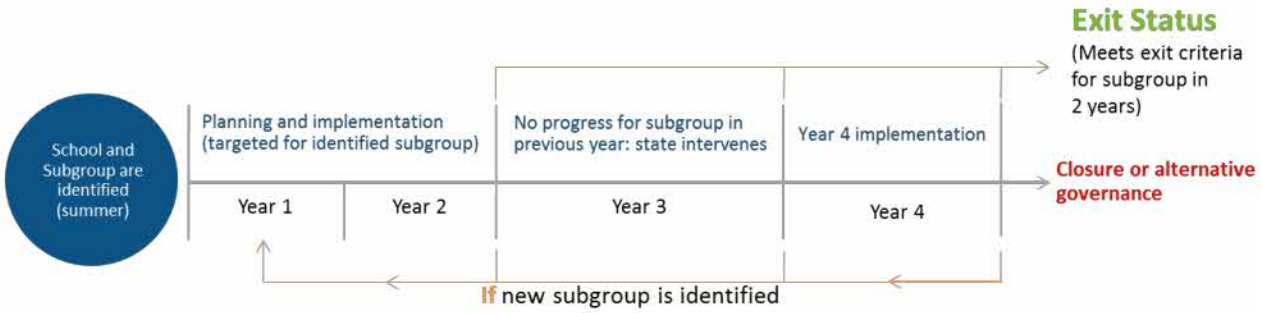
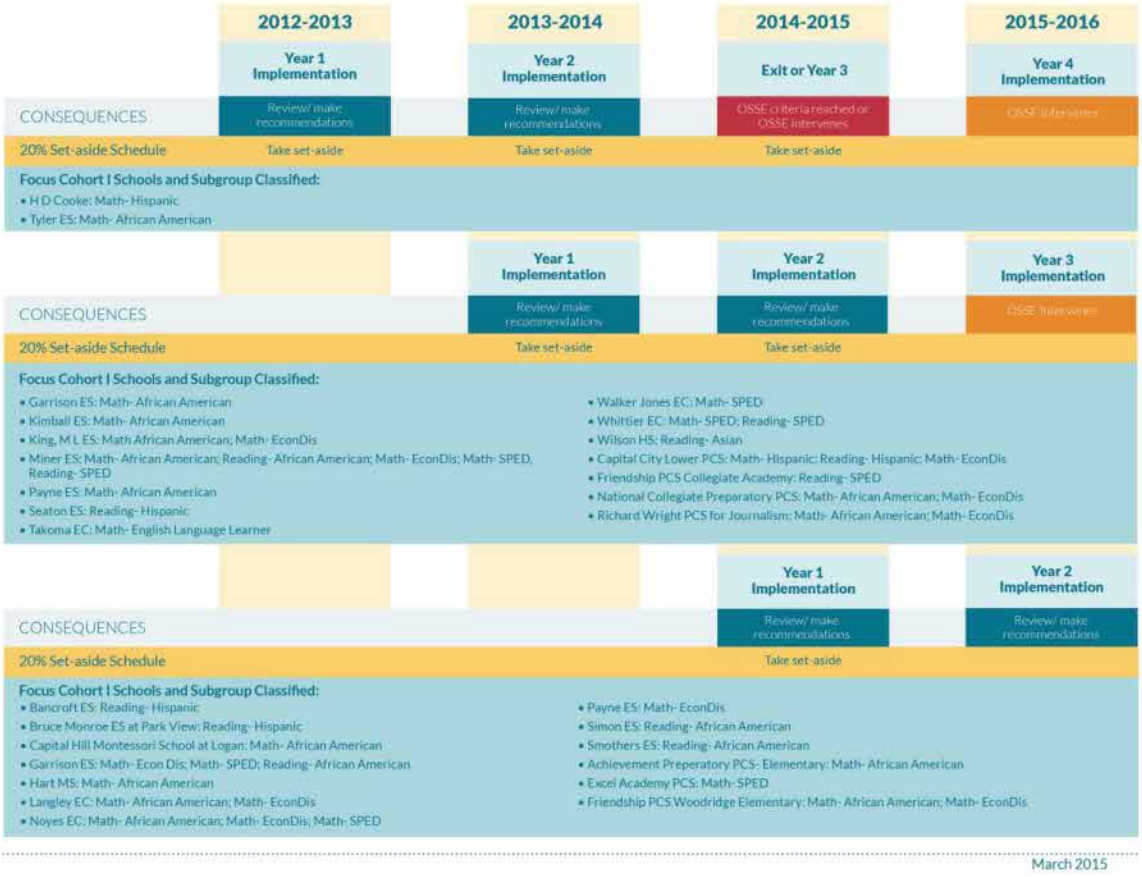


Table 2.E.iii.1: DCPS, PSCB, and OSSE Roles for Focus Schools

Focus School Timeline- 3 School Scenarios		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
School A	School Activity	Planning & Implementation	Implementation	Exit
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	N/A
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	N/A
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	Y	Y	N/A
School B	School Activity	Planning & Implementation	Implementation	Implementation & OSSE Intervention
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	RTA
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	N	Y	Y
School C	School Activity	Planning & Implementation	Implementation	Implementation & OSSE Intervention
	DCPS/PCSB Activity	Mon & RTA	Mon & RTA	Mon
	OSSE Activity	OTA	OTA	RTA
	Met Exit Criteria at end of year? (Y/N)	N	N	N

Key: Mon = Waiver monitoring for schools | RTA= Required technical assistance for schools | OTA= Optional technical assistance for schools

Figure 2.E.iii.2: Focus School Cohorts



Summary

Focus schools will be held to the same fundamental goals as Priority schools for closing all achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in the District of Columbia graduate from high school college- and career-ready. To reach this goal, Focus schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate student achievement for all students and subgroups. The interventions for Focus schools are similar to those for Priority schools. The primary difference between the two is that Focus school interventions target the subgroup that caused the school to be identified as a Focus school, whereas in a Priority school, the interventions target the entire student population. OSSE will provide tools for LEA and school-based improvement teams to assess school and student needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps to ensure student subgroup learning improves in each Focus school.

2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit focus status have made significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps? Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit focus status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?*

At the end of the school year during the two-year implementation of a school improvement plan and targeted interventions, OSSE will determine whether each Focus school has made sufficient progress to exit Focus school status.

In summary, a school will exit focus status if it meets all of the following criteria:

1. No longer meets the definition of a Focus school for two consecutive years:
   - Disproportionate Subgroup Performance: Reduces the achievement gap for all subgroups to below 20 for one or more years
   - Within-school Achievement Gap Index: Reduces the within-school achievement gap so that the school would not be identified for a within-school achievement gap
   - Participation: Exceeds 95 percent participation for the subgroup leading to the initial identification; **and**
2. Its lowest-performing subgroups have met their AMOs for two years and/or have demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years as measured by the accountability index.

Schools that were already classified as "Focus". During the first year of administering a new state assessment, where the Department has approved a one-year pause of school classifications, will need one year of meeting the School Index Score exit criteria to exit status, instead of two, as the results from the first year of the new assessment will not be used for high stakes decisions. This would not apply for schools that already met the criteria for one year, and would have exited Focus status as a result. These schools require one more year of demonstrating progress once the results of the new assessment are incorporated into the accountability system.

These criteria ensure that the lowest-performing schools in the District of Columbia are held to high standards for fully and effectively implementing selected intervention models to ensure that student achievement improves and achievement gaps decrease significantly over time. Evidence demonstrating the high standards for meeting the exit criteria indicates that the school has built a foundation for academic achievement that justifies exiting focus status. Only when this has been demonstrated will a school exit focus status.

Through collaboration with DCPS, PCSB, the Human Capital Task Force, the Student Growth Task Force, the Deputy Mayor of Education's Office, and other partners, OSSE will enhance the effectiveness and coherence of district systems to support school improvement. In addition, OSSE will evaluate, support, and monitor schools and LEAs around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital and financial/asset management. By doing so, OSSE believes that the District of Columbia's students will show annual academic growth, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps, particularly with regard to students with special needs and ELLs in Focus

schools.

OSSE will regularly monitor DCPS's and PCSB's implementation as well as the impact of the interventions to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress toward increasing student achievement.

2.F Provide Incentives and Supports for other Title I Schools

2.F Describe how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA's new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

In the District of Columbia, over 80 percent of schools receive Title I funds. Therefore, the majority of incentives and interventions outlined in this section and in the preceding sections will apply to nearly all District of Columbia schools.

Educators and professionals in schools are in the best position to identify and respond to student needs. Therefore, OSSE seeks to maximize flexibility at the LEA and school level so that school professionals can plan and implement the most appropriate activities. OSSE's role is to provide the tools necessary for school-based teams to assess needs, develop effective Title I plans, and implement action steps to ensure that student learning improves.

OSSE will provide opportunities and services to all LEAs and schools based on the statewide network of tiered support. The requirements of the ESEA flexibility request align with OSSE's differentiated approach to serving schools and will yield maximum benefit to LEAs, schools, and students.

Differentiated Interventions and Supports

All schools that fail to meet the same AMO for two consecutive years and that are not already identified as Priority or Focus schools will be identified as schools requiring additional, targeted support. In partnership with DCPS and PCSB, these schools will be required to identify and respond to the needs of their students.

If a non-Priority and non-Focus Title I school misses its performance on the same AMO for two consecutive years, the LEA will be required to expand its current Title I plan to describe the interventions and supports that address all students and/or subgroup(s) that missed the school AMOs. Additionally, as part of its Title I plan and Title I grant application, LEAs with schools that do not meet the same AMOs for two consecutive years must describe how the LEA will identify needs based on the school AMOs that were missed, select priority objectives and interventions aligned to those needs, plan action steps to address deficiencies related to those objectives, implement those action steps, and evaluate their progress.

Interventions

The LEA Consolidated Application plan to address deficiencies in school-based practices may include one or more of the following interventions:

- Training to improve the quality of school leadership;
- High-quality curriculum aligned to the CCSS;
- Expansion of learning time before, during and after school to supplement instruction to school-selected students provided by external providers, schools, or LEAs;
- Assistance in the analysis and use of data;
- Supplemental research-based and job-embedded professional development; or
- Any other activity that is specifically required by an action step included in the Title I plan of the Consolidated Application in support of an objective

OSSE will provide further guidance for updating Title I plans and Title I grant applications at the beginning of each school year.

Each school will be evaluated based on its achievement vis-à-vis targets, implementation of the interventions and supports as described in the revised Title I plan and in the Title I grant application, and the growth of its students as measured by the new accountability system.

Additional Resources Available to All Schools

OSSE assesses, reviews, and makes recommendations to the interventions and supports plan as it relates to the use of the Title I and alignment with the overall Title I program, offer technical assistance targeted to the struggling subgroup(s), and monitor school-level progress for future academic cycles and increase technical assistance when needed.

Schools are invited and encouraged to attend regional trainings and professional development sessions designed around OSSE interventions and school turnaround principles. Further, as described in previous sections, OSSE has reorganized how it provides foundational training and technical assistance via the LEA Support Model, OSSE's State System of Support (SSOS).. OSSE will implement a system of incentives and interventions in all District of Columbia schools (Table 2.F.ii).

Table 2.F.ii. OSSE Incentives and Interventions by School Classification

SCHOOL CATEGORY:	Reward School	Rising School	Developing School	Focus School	Priority School
Receive SEA Recognition	Yes	No	No	No	No
Eligible to Receive SEA Financial Reward	Yes	No	No	No	No
Flexibility in the Use of Funds	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Describe Continuous Improvement in Title I Grant Application	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Implement Interventions and Supports If Statewide AMOs Not Met	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Implement Turnaround Principles	No	No	No	No	Yes

OSSE will monitor interventions and supports while working closely with senior leadership to ensure that all intervention and support initiatives are tightly coordinated and effective. OSSE executes the process and ensures that LEAs comply with critical federal regulations and quality implementation related to school improvement.

LEA and School Performance Reports

OSSE's primary way to hold LEAs and schools accountable for performance is through publicly-available, annual performance reports. Each LEA's schools will be evaluated by OSSE based on (a) school achievement on PARCC and Science assessments and the growth of its students in proficiency level descriptor, (b) information on whether the school met targets for all students and subgroups, (c) assessment participation rates, (d) graduation rates for high schools, (e) demographic information, and (f) fiscal data. Proficiency and growth will be reported over time for English/Language Arts (ELA), math, science, and composition for all students and for each subgroup. Each LEA's schools will be compared to all schools in the District as well as to individual schools with similar student demographics. High-performing schools with different demographic compositions will be profiled to identify best practices. These will form the core of exemplars gathered by OSSE to share with all schools, particularly those schools that may have similar demographic profiles.

DCPS and PCSB, will be responsible for making data available to staff, parents, and others to aid in the identification of areas in need of improvement and make recommendations for interventions and supports. They will be required to have public meetings to review data and identify areas that need improvement. LEAs, DCPS, and PCSB will also be required to address performance gaps among subgroups and to develop proposed targets for improvement using the 20 percent reservation of Title I funds. OSSE, will annually review these goals and will provide targeted technical assistance, where necessary.

DCPS and PCSB School Reports

OSSE recognizes that reports from DCPS and PCSB provide significant value to LEAs and schools as well. Both the DCPS School Scorecard and the PCSB PMF provide comprehensive information on school performance that goes beyond the data incorporated into OSSE's system of classifying schools for recognition, accountability, and support. LEAs and schools can use this information to inform a needs assessment and planning for continuous school improvement. LEAs and schools retain the autonomy and responsibility for identifying and implementing strategies and activities that will most significantly and positively affect student achievement. OSSE's work supplements the work of both DCPS and PCSB, which have policies in place to ensure that schools that fail to improve over a significant number of years are closed. OSSE will

recommend school closure where appropriate, but OSSE does not have and does not seek authority to require school closure.

Summary

The statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support as described in this section will improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, and close achievement gaps. Working in partnership with DCPS, PCSB, and charter LEAs will be critical to the successful implementation of the new accountability system.

2.G Build SEA, LEA, and School Capacity to Improve Student Learning

2.G Describe the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:

i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;

ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and

iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

Building capacity in the SEA, LEAs, and schools is critical for increasing student achievement, improving graduation rates, and closing achievement gaps. Throughout this document, examples of how OSSE as the SEA, DCPS, PCSB, and charter LEAs will continue to support the work begun as part of RTTT and further enhanced via implementation of the first approved ESEA Waiver.

As part of its SEA responsibilities, OSSE will continue to build capacity at the LEA and school level by:

- Providing its Statewide System of Support, as described on page 67.
- Providing guidance, technical assistance/support, and opportunities to participate in state-level trainings on CCSS implementation and on anchor papers and other assessment preparation;
- Developing and implementing statewide guidelines for teacher and leader evaluation systems;
- Making information available that helps in the understanding of the state-level differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system;
- Leveraging federal resources (Title I, SIG, Title II, Title III, and other federal) to

maximize coordination and academic achievement;

- Developing websites and publications that help teachers align instruction to the common core and share exemplary lessons;
- Providing high-quality data on assessments aligned to CCSS and the NGSS; and
- Connecting schools struggling with external partners to ensure that students reap the maximum benefit from CCSS and the NGSS.

OSSE remains committed to increasing academic achievement, closing achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in DC graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA's process for ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources) likely to result in successful implementation of such interventions and improved student achievement?*

Building OSSE Capacity

As described in Section 2.A, the newly created Division of Elementary, Secondary, and Specialized Education (ESSE) within OSSE has supported the development of a statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support to maximize resources both within and outside of the agency. OSSE has established LEA Support Teams that advise OSSE leadership about LEA needs and opportunities to partner and assist LEAs and schools with needs assessment, coordination, and development of federal grants programs, and use of federal funds. OSSE will continue to concentrate primarily on Priority and Focus schools and remain committed solely to driving capacity for OSSE to deliver support to LEAs to improve student outcomes.

CCSS and Educator Evaluation Supports

To build the capacity of LEAs, OSSE continues to also emphasize support for two critical areas: CCSS and teacher/leader evaluation.

The District of Columbia believes that the adoption and effective implementation of the CCSS will develop college- and career-ready learners. Due to the District of Columbia's small size and geographic footprint, OSSE has been able to comprehensively implement the standards sooner than most states and begin transitioning to aligned assessments. In order to make the change successful, OSSE plans to continue to support all teachers throughout the District with professional development and all relevant training.

To reach the District of Columbia's teachers of students with disabilities and ELLs, the Division of Elementary, secondary, and Specialized Education, in collaboration with other divisions within OSSE, provides core professional development, training, and technical assistance to all LEAs in the District. The core professional development program provides high-quality, evidenced-based training to all DC educators with a specific focus on improving

the educational outcomes for special populations.

OSSE also continues to help LEAs develop more rigorous teacher and leader evaluation and support systems by providing standards, guidance, and technical assistance. To advance this work, OSSE formed a teacher effectiveness team that will provide exemplars, technical assistance, and training to LEAs. The team coordinates peer reviews of proposed LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems and other intra-district collaboration. In SY 2015-16, OSSE will launch a state teacher evaluation model that is based on research and successful practices in DC, as another mean of supporting LEAs in developing educator evaluation systems. The model will be optional for LEAs to opt-in to. Principle 3 of this flexibility request provides additional information on educator evaluation systems.

Monitoring of and Technical Assistance for Schools

As discussed throughout Principle 2, OSSE will monitor, provide technical assistance to, support, and hold LEAs accountable for interventions in Priority and Focus schools and other classified schools. OSSE first increased the amount of actionable information on student achievement available to schools, districts, and the public and then refined its LEA Support Model. The new structures created through the LEA Support Model also provide improved supports and foster new, high-quality education models so students attending the lowest-performing schools have improved options. OSSE's LEA Support Teams will be responsible for advising OSSE leadership about opportunities to better support LEAs and Focus and Priority schools. Finally, OSSE will continue to use other federal resources, where appropriate, to provide supports and interventions to Priority and Focus schools.

Title I Funds

Funds that were previously reserved under ESEA section 1116(b)(10) will continue to be leveraged to support the implementation of interventions in schools identified as Focus or Priority, as described throughout Principle 2. If a Title I school (that is not a Priority or Focus school) should miss the same AMO targets for two consecutive years, the LEA will be required to address strategies for increasing achievement in those targeted areas in its Consolidated Title I plan. In addition, as a part of the Consolidated Title I plan, the LEA must demonstrate that resources have been allocated to support the interventions described so there is alignment between the needs of the school(s) that missed AMO targets and the use of Title I funds across the district. OSSE will provide guidance to LEAs on the components of a high-quality LEA plan and expectations for AMO schools.

Other Federal Funds

For Priority schools, LEAs may apply to access School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding to support the implementation of SIG turnaround models. Additionally, OSSE will make available other federal funds including Title I 1003(a), Title II, Title III, and funds from the Scholarships for Opportunities and Results (SOAR) Act to support school improvement.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA's process for holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools, likely to improve LEA capacity to*

support school improvement?

The success of this ESEA flexibility request and its implementation is founded on the belief that OSSE plays both an oversight role as it relates to the statewide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, and a supportive role to LEAs and schools. For this reason, OSSE believes in LEA flexibility, within the boundaries set by statute and regulations therein, in the implementation of Title I programs and the use of Title I funds. For this framework to be successful, a strong belief in accountability is necessary to improve academic achievement and move students toward college- and career-readiness. As noted above, PCSB and DCPS have accountability systems that play a key role in statewide improvement, but they are not included in the waiver as they are not commitments of the SEA. A description of their accountability systems is included in this request as an attachment.

LEA Accountability

As part of its SEA responsibilities, OSSE will report AMOs at the LEA level on an annual LEA report card. For AMO purposes, the LEA-level report card will include AMOs for DCPS as an LEA (inclusive of all DCPS schools) and for each charter LEA. Any LEA that fails to meet the same LEA-level AMO for two consecutive years will be identified as an LEA requiring additional support. These LEAs will be required to identify low-performing student groups and implement targeted interventions that respond to the needs of those students, and to expand their current LEA Title I plan to describe the interventions and supports that address all students and/or subgroup(s) that missed the LEA AMOs. Additionally, as part of their Title I plans and applications, LEAs that miss the same AMOs for two consecutive years must describe, in their Consolidated Application (Title I, II, III), how the LEA will address needs based on the LEA AMOs that were missed, select priority objectives and interventions aligned to those needs, plan action steps to address deficiencies related to those objectives, implement those action steps, and evaluate progress. The LEAs will additionally be required to plan for a reasonable and necessary amount of Title I funds to implement interventions and supports described in the revised Title I plans to improve student achievement on the LEA AMOs that were missed.

Interventions and supports to address deficiencies in LEA-Level practices may include one or more of the following options:

- Focusing on learning and achievement that includes continuously guiding site-based leadership through performance management and addressing barriers to education goals;
- Recruiting, supporting, and retaining highly-effective staff to build capacity and meet organizational expectations;
- Guiding the implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that align to CCSS;
- Using data for planning and accountability, and distributing results to inform decision-

making;

- Engaging families and the community to promote positive student achievement and behavior;
- Addressing physical, social, and emotional needs of students to ensure safe and supportive learning environments;
- Ensuring equity and adequacy of fiscal and human resources to meet school and student needs; or
- Other strategies that are specifically required by an action step included in the Title I plan or Title I grant application in support of specific objectives.

OSSE provided guidelines for updating LEA Title I plans and Title I grant applications at the beginning of the 2012–13 school year, and this guidance is provided annually through OSSE's grants management conference. In addition, OSSE's implementation of an Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) allows for OSSE to significantly reduce burden, decrease human error, and provide real-time updates that support effective and compliant grant management.

Through the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED) , OSSE is also able to provide LEAs with a variety of data elements that can help guide instructional improvement. SLED provides LEAs with access to more comprehensive information on all state assessments, college attainment data, and college-readiness assessments. OSSE continues to provide comprehensive technical assistance to LEAs on how to better understand and make effective use of this data and the data in the Special Education Data System (SEDS).

In addition to LEA level report cards, OSSE will issue a report card that includes overall performance of all charter LEAs based on subgroup and "all students" AMOs to gauge student performance and support the monitoring of PCSB's roles and responsibilities with regard to Title I accountability.

SEA Monitoring of LEA Progress

Each LEA will be evaluated based on its achievement vis-à-vis targets, implementation of the interventions and supports as described in the revised Title I plan and in the Consolidated application, and the growth of its students as measured by the statewide accountability system. For charter LEAs, OSSE will continue to work with PCSB to ensure that appropriate oversight of interventions and supports, and monitoring of progress, takes place.

Combined with the activities embedded in the statewide network of tiered support described throughout Principle 2, LEA progress will be monitored on a bi-annual basis by collecting information to gauge implementation of interventions and supports that address the LEA AMOs that were missed. If the LEA does not meet targets or progress in the areas that were identified in need of improvement based on the LEA AMOs that were missed, OSSE will make recommendations for the use of Title I funds and intensify guidance, technical assistance,

and monitoring.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA describe a process for the rigorous review and approval of any external providers used by the SEA and its LEAs to support the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools that is likely to result in the identification of high-quality partners with experience and expertise applicable to the needs of the school, including specific subgroup needs?*

OSSE provided LEAs with information regarding effective external turnaround service providers by the start of SY 2012-13. OSSE continues to update its vendor database to compile a list of external partners that have a record of effectiveness in providing services to schools. Providers are determined effective based on the use of research-based effectiveness models that have the greatest likelihood of increasing student academic achievement, alignment of services to needs of schools and LEAs, and timeliness of service delivery. To ensure that external providers used by LEAs have been rigorously reviewed and approved, OSSE will collect information regarding effectiveness of external turnaround service providers by developing and implementing a performance matrix that takes into account the selection criteria listed above. This information will be made available to LEAs and schools as part of OSSE's annual publication of school turnaround performance reports. External service providers that do not show a record of effectiveness will be given a probationary period not to exceed the next bi-annual review session to demonstrate effectiveness.

Summary

The District's proposed statewide system of recognition, accountability, and support is designed to effectively address the broad spectrum of needs in the District of Columbia. The tiered accountability system envisioned in this application capitalizes on the roles and responsibilities of the SEA, PCSB, and the LEAs for school accountability. All of these efforts combined are specifically focused on enhancing performance to improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, and achieving mastery in the CCSS without creating unnecessary and counterproductive burdens on schools.

3.A Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

Students come first, and the most effective way to improve student learning is to provide them with the most effective professionals, teachers, and school leaders. Effective teachers and school leaders have the skills and knowledge to remove barriers to education and provide the necessary support to maximize students' classroom experiences. Effective school leaders and teachers are those who are best qualified to provide solutions and to improve student outcomes.

OSSE's theory of action with respect to supporting teachers and leaders is that providing exemplary standards, guidance, and technical assistance has helped LEAs develop more rigorous teacher and leader evaluation and support systems. Investment in development of rigorous and meaningful evaluation systems has helped improve instructional practices, resulting in greater student achievement, and higher graduation rates. Therefore, OSSE's role has been to develop policies that allow for local flexibility, provide guidance, disseminate best practices, and ensure effective monitoring by the charter authorizer to ensure that charter LEAs meet state and federal guidelines.

The state evaluation guidelines and monitoring by OSSE have ensured that teachers and leaders are prominently involved in the development of evaluation systems, including feedback from a task force of LEA human capital staff members and the Title I Committee of Practitioners. OSSE recognizes the need for buy-in for the new systems, while understanding the importance of developing meaningful and valid measures that will help the recipients of the evaluations improve instructional practices. OSSE is in a unique position to allow for local flexibility with respect to teacher and principal evaluation systems due to the variety existing in the District's educational landscape. OSSE currently oversees 61 LEAs: one large traditional, school district LEA (DCPS) and 60 charter school LEAs. Due to the District's RtTT grant, evaluation reform has been catapulted, with 30 LEAs having implemented evaluation systems which meet the majority of principle 3 for at least three school years. These LEAs have provided models for successful implementation and OSSE has utilized these best practices during multiple sessions. OSSE will continue to support LEAs in their Principle 3 implementation though technical assistance sessions, guidance documents, and effective monitoring of DCPS and DCPCSB.

With respect to public charter schools, School Reform Act of 1995 provides charter schools with autonomy over personnel, including evaluation systems, hiring, and firing. ESEA likewise recognizes the autonomy of charter schools by allowing charter schools to adhere to the requirements of the State charter laws for the purposes of employing "highly-qualified teachers." According to the ED's ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions, if the SEA can demonstrate to the ED that all charter schools in the state are held to a high standard of

accountability through a strong charter school authorizer system (consistent with the Department's Charter Schools Program (CSP) assurances for SEA grantees), the SEA may allow its charter schools to develop and implement evaluation and support systems that meet all of the elements of Principle 3 but that do not necessarily adhere specifically to the SEA's guidelines.

Pursuant to a determination of the CSP Director at the U.S. Department of Education dated February 3, 2012, PCSB is in compliance with assurances 3A and 3B of CSP. This means that the District is considered to have a strong charter school authorizer system. OSSE will, therefore, allow District public charter schools the flexibility to develop and implement evaluation and support systems that meet all of the federal requirements of Principle 3, but that do not necessarily adhere to OSSE-developed guidelines. PCSB will ensure that the systems developed by charter schools meet the requirements of Principle 3.

In this ESEA flexibility request application, OSSE requests that the schools with appropriate evaluation systems continue to be exempt from various *highly qualified* requirements under NCLB. Schools that have developed and implemented appropriate evaluation systems will no longer need to develop highly qualified teacher (HQT) improvement plans or set aside specific funds to ensure its teachers are highly qualified. However, the expectation remains that schools will continue to ensure teachers are highly qualified. OSSE will shift from providing technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing their HQT improvement plans to developing and implementing high-quality teacher and leader evaluation systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the SEA's guidelines likely to result in support for all teachers, including teachers who are specialists working with students with disabilities and English Learners and general classroom teachers with these students in their classrooms that will enable them to improve their instructional practice?*

Continuous Improvement in Educator Evaluation

All evaluations throughout the District have provided teachers and leaders with clear expectations, created a common vision of effective instruction for all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, offered meaningful feedback about how to improve practice, and informed teacher and leader professional development needs. OSSE staff worked with the Human Capital Task Force to develop evaluation requirements with a goal to improve instructional practice. The Human Capital Task Force consists of LEA representatives that work on human capital issues.

As noted above, OSSE required every LEA to develop a rigorous teacher and leader evaluation system that incorporates student outcomes, includes multiple measures of performance, provides teachers with timely and constructive feedback, and is used to inform human capital decisions. Each LEA submitted a plan for meeting these guidelines and received approval. Table 3.A.2 below describes the requirements for LEA evaluation systems.

Table 3.A.1: RTTT Requirements for Evaluation and Support System That Meet ESEA Flexibility Requirements and Those That Will Be Added to the New State Guidelines

ESEA Flexibility Requirement	Existing RTTT Requirement?	Will Be Included in State Guidelines
Teacher and principal evaluation and support systems will be used for continual improvement of instruction	Yes	Yes
Differentiate performance meaningfully by using at least three performance levels	Yes	Yes
Use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels	Yes* (does not address validity)	Yes (State guidelines will also require LEAs to conduct or participate in a validity study)
Include as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (including ELLs and students with disabilities)	Yes* (does not specify a percent of growth data for non-tested grades and subjects)	Yes (State guidelines will require at least 15 percent growth for non-tested grades and subjects)
Include other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys)	Yes	Yes
Evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis	Yes	Yes
Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development	Yes	Yes
Use to inform personnel decisions	Yes	Yes

Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems	No	Yes
Provide training to teachers, evaluators, and other school staff on the evaluation system	No	Yes

Modifying State Requirements

OSSE used lessons learned from RtTT implementation to develop guidelines to ensure that the District of Columbia's evaluation systems will offer reliable, valid, and complete data to inform personnel decisions. They also provide leaders and managers with information and tools they can use to offer support to teachers, and create opportunities for them to pursue professional development and growth. DCPS must continue to implement evaluation systems which adhere to these state guidelines. All District Charter LEAs must continue to implement evaluation systems which adhere to the federal guidelines.

Other Initiatives that Support Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

RTTT Accomplishments

Over the past two years, numerous RTTT initiatives aligned to teacher and leader effectiveness such as the Charter School Teacher Pipelines Grant and the Educator Preparation Profile continued to be implemented. . OSSE's Charter School Teacher Pipelines Grant supported the development or expansion of teacher residency programs that recruit, train, evaluate, and place highly effective teachers into both traditional and charter public schools in the District of Columbia. This competitive grant is part of the RTTT grant program ending in 2015.

The Educator Preparation Profile is intended to provide the public with information on the effectiveness of educator preparation programs in the District of Columbia using a number of performance indicators, including teacher evaluation data, which will measure program completers' impact on student achievement. The Educator Preparation Profile is also a project that is part of the RTTT program.

Finally, another competitive grant that is part of RTTT, the Professional Learning and Communities of Effectiveness grant (PLaCES), focuses on developing professional learning communities that work together to address an educational challenge. Two grants were awarded to consortiums of LEAs led by E. L. Haynes Public Charter School and Cesar Chavez Public Charter School respectively. Each consortium has developed resources which equip teachers to transition to the CCSS.

Internal Alignment of Educator Quality, Effectiveness, and Accountability Functions
During the early part of 2014, OSSE formed the Educator Quality and Effectiveness unit which operates within the Teaching and Learning cluster of the Division of Elementary, Secondary, and Specialized Education. In creating this unit, OSSE smartly consolidated many of the agency's programmatic functions that relate to teachers and school leaders. This new unit has responsibility for the following domains: educator licensure, educator preparation accountability, educator recognition, educator preparation, and federal grants aimed at improvement of teacher quality. Through this new unit, OSSE has begun an effort to streamline its policy initiatives, supports, and technical assistance related to teachers, with the singular primary objective of ensuring that every District of Columbia classroom is led by an effective or highly effective teacher.

State Model Teacher Evaluation System
The DC model teacher evaluation system, a collaborative project between OSSE, Thurgood Marshall Academy, and numerous LEAs was launched in the Fall of 2014. Over the course of SY 2014-15, these stakeholders will convene as a planning committee, with monthly meetings consisting of professional development, language norming, and critical feedback regarding aspects of teacher evaluation. The goal of each meeting will be to create a set of procedures and tools for use in the DC model teacher evaluation system. In turn, the end of the planning year will result in an agreed-upon set of procedures, tools or other applicable materials which form a comprehensive evaluation system. The model system will be available for opt-in use by DC LEAs during SY 2015-16.

Through the aforementioned effort, OSSE will aid in creating an environment where educator evaluations not only contribute to decisions about human capital but also lead to improved instructional practice and school climate. During 2015 and beyond, OSSE will continue to pursue initiatives and leverage its competitive grant funds with the aim of encouraging the growth of educator effectiveness in the District of Columbia.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that all measures that are included in determining performance levels are valid measures, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA?*

For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA define a statewide approach for measuring student growth on these assessments?

For grades and subjects in which assessments are not required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA either specify the measures of student growth that LEAs must use or select from or plan to provide guidance to LEAs on what measures of student growth are appropriate, and establish a system for ensuring that LEAs will use valid measures?

Evaluation systems submitted by LEAs have to meet the following criteria:

- Ensuring validity of measures: OSSE has analyzed the relationship between student achievement and teacher and leader evaluation ratings for RTTT LEAs by analyzing

the correlation between teacher and leader evaluation ratings and student growth and proficiency in a school. OSSE will collect assurances from PCSB that charter LEAs use valid measures in implementing teacher and leader evaluations. OSSE will provide guidance on how to ensure validity. OSSE will also provide exemplars of valid observation rubrics through the state model evaluation system that LEAs can choose to adopt.

- Training for teachers, leaders, and evaluators: LEAs are required to provide training to all of their evaluators and develop plans to work toward inter-rater reliability among evaluators within the LEA.

- Student growth measures: DCPS schools have met the requirement to include a measure of student achievement as 50 percent of teacher evaluations in tested grades and subjects. Specifically, DCPS schools have included a growth measure based on the state assessment for at least 30 percent of the evaluation rating and may select another measure of achievement or growth for up to 20 percent of the evaluation rating. Schools will be required to include a measure of student growth as a significant component of principal evaluations. DCPS has explained how their student growth measures are consistent with their school mission, values, and goals. For DCPS teachers in non-tested grades and subjects in grades K–12, schools are required to select a measure of growth that will account for at least 15 percent of the evaluation rating. OSSE has provided guidance and technical assistance to LEAs in using achievement measures within teacher evaluations.
  All DC LEAs will have the option to suspend use of a growth measure for SY 2014-15 due to the transition to the new PARCC State assessment. The suspension of this requirement will only be for SY 2014-15, and will return during SY 2015-16.

- Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems: Schools are required to describe how they include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising teacher and principal evaluation and in making revisions as needed.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA incorporate student growth into its performance-level definitions with sufficient weighting to ensure that performance levels will differentiate among teachers and principals who have made significantly different contributions to student growth or closing achievement gaps?*

Student Growth in Teacher and Leader Evaluation Guidelines

To meet the requirements of ESEA flexibility, all schools receiving Title I funds will have to incorporate student growth into teacher and leader evaluations. For school leaders in DCPS, student growth will have to be a significant component of an evaluation system consisting of multiple components. DCPS will have to explain how their student growth measures are consistent with their school mission, values, and goals. The process of using

student growth as a significant component of teacher and leader evaluations will be suspended during SY 2014-15 and be re-established for SY 2015-16. During SY 2014-15, however, LEAs must still monitor student growth. Furthermore, during SY 2014-15, DCPS and PCSB will be required to ensure that LEAs continue to monitor student growth in their monitoring efforts.

For DCPS teachers in tested grades and subjects, 50 percent is based on student achievement. Specifically, at least 30 percent will is a growth measure based on the state assessment, and at least 15 percent will is an achievement or growth measure determined by the LEA. For DCPS teachers in non-state assessment grades and subjects, at least 15 percent is based on an LEA-determined measure of student achievement or growth.

Stakeholders were concerned about the ability of LEAs to identify student growth measures for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. Therefore, OSSE has broadened its definition of student growth measures from student growth only to allow for both measures of growth and achievement for teachers in non -tested grades and subjects. Moreover, OSSE hired a contractor who provided support to LEAs in using student achievement measures within teacher and leader evaluations.

The reason for the different weights for teachers in tested versus non tested grades and subjects is that student achievement is much harder to measure when there aren't standardized assessments, and therefore it should be used judiciously in evaluating teachers. Charter LEAs will have the flexibility to develop their own methods for incorporating student growth into their teacher and leader evaluations that comply with the requirements of Principle 3.

For context, DCPS uses Teacher-Assessed Student Achievement Data (TAS) to measure student achievement in the non-tested grades. Essentially, this a process by which principals and teachers set a goal for student achievement at the beginning of the year, identify an assessment to measure that goal, and then track progress throughout the year. At the end of the year, teachers receive a score from their principal on the data that they present. While TAS is a meaningful measure of student achievement that allows teachers to capture student growth not reflected on the state assessment, TAS student achievement goals and assessments are not standardized or administered securely. For this reason, DCPS initially assigned a 15 percent weight to the TAS component. They have now implemented TAS for five years and have made improvements each year.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Will the SEA's guidelines ensure that evaluations occur with a frequency sufficient to ensure that feedback is provided in a timely manner to inform effective practice?*

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Will it [student growth] be used to inform personnel decisions?*

OSSE's Teacher and Principal Evaluation Requirements oblige that DCPS ensure teachers receive continuous and constructive feedback, since this feedback is critical to improving instructional practice. For charter LEAs' teacher and principal evaluation systems, PCSB will review and provide feedback to ensure the federal requirements of Principle 3. In addition to providing specific feedback, LEAs must ensure that schools provide targeted professional development based on evaluation findings to ensure that professional development focuses on the needs of educators in their schools. LEAs will gauge educator performance using a variety of measures to provide a holistic picture of educator performance. Finally, evaluation results are only meaningful if they are used to improve teacher practice and to inform personnel decisions. LEAs must ensure that schools use these results to inform personnel decisions, such as those about compensation, retention, and promotion.

Guidance and Technical Assistance

OSSE will continue to provide and facilitate technical assistance to LEAs and schools as they implement evaluation and support systems. To ensure alignment with the CCSS, OSSE provided guidance and technical assistance in aligning the CCSS with teacher and principal evaluation systems and in evaluating teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities. OSSE can use discretionary grant funds to provide technical assistance from national providers to LEAs in developing their systems.

Identifying exemplary evaluation systems is critical to this process. To that end, OSSE has identified exemplary evaluation systems that national organizations have determined are research-based and have evidence of validity. These exemplars will provide guidance to LEAs in developing or modifying their evaluation systems. In addition, OSSE has partnered with a high-achieving LEA and a group of other LEAs to plan the model state evaluation system during SY 2014-15. The goal of this group is to collaborate and scale best practices currently in use.

OSSE currently houses information about teacher and principal evaluation requirements, standards, and evaluation systems on the LearnDC.org webpage. LearnDC.org includes OSSE policies, information about best practices, and presentation materials that LEAs and schools can use in their communications with teachers and principals. OSSE will also house the state model evaluation implementation resources on LearnDC.org.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the SEA's guidelines likely to result in differentiated professional development that meets the needs of teachers?*

Professional Development

OSSE will continue to provide professional development opportunities to support LEAs and schools in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation systems. During SY 2012–13, OSSE offered professional development sessions to LEAs on designing effective teacher evaluation systems. These sessions focused on topics such as the components of

effective evaluation systems, how to conduct observations and provide useful feedback, and how to ensure inter-rater reliability. Professional development sessions also focused specifically on how teachers of special education students and ELLs could be evaluated. Since LEAs developed their own systems, they were responsible for providing training on the systems themselves.

OSSE will also continue to provide high-quality professional development offerings to teachers and principals throughout the District to help them effectively implement the CCSS and address areas of need identified through evaluations. The Office of Training and Technical Assistance Unit offers a variety of professional learning experiences for special and general educators that focus on the following areas:

- Compliance with federal and local requirements for special education and related services;
- Effective pedagogy and rigorous curriculum, including alignment to the CCSS and the NGSS;
- Implementation of differentiated instruction and behavioral support; and
- Appropriate use of accommodations, modifications, and assistive technologies.

In addition, there are several ways OSSE will continue support LEAs' and schools' efforts to implement the CCSS and to infuse the CCSS into classroom teaching and evaluations. For example, OSSE will provide professional development to LEAs and schools in assessing the quality and complexity of texts teachers are teaching and their ability to help students respond to text-based questions and write evidence-based responses. OSSE will also assist LEAs and schools with infusing the CCSS in teacher evaluation systems by taking the following steps:

- Providing professional development around interpretation of the CCSS;
- Developing a voluntary competency exam that LEAs and teacher and principal preparation programs can use to assess teachers' knowledge of the CCSS; and
- Helping LEAs review their observation rubrics to ensure they are aligned with the CCSS.

OSSE publishes a guide annually about its many professional development offerings. The Office of Standards, Assessments and Accountability also provides professional development sessions that focus on interpreting the CCSS and their inclusion on the new DC CAS. This office also provides professional development on understanding and interpreting the ACCESS assessment for ELLs and on providing appropriate instruction and assessment for ELLs.

The District of Columbia has also provided targeted professional development for ELL educators. Specifically, these sessions have focused on ELD standards, language

differentiation during content instruction and assessment, and the effective use of assessment results to increase student achievement. Additionally, Title IIIA LEAs and consortia receive ongoing technical assistance and professional development around language acquisition program development, monitoring, and evaluation. These activities support LEAs in ensuring that Title IIIA funds are used to supplement the language and academic programs for ELLs.

Several professional development sessions were delivered on summer 2012 for ESL educators. The Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), for example, is a hands-on, practical course that focuses on strategies for making content area instruction comprehensible and meaningful for ELLs in grades 2 through 12.
An ELL institute is planned on 2015 for LEA instructional leaders and teachers to explore and examine language acquisition-related policies, programs, and best practices. Strategies that participants will learn include cooperative learning, adapting text for ELLs, building on prior knowledge, offering multiple ways to engage, providing comprehensible input, and making a home/school connection. This training will also be provided with a focus on blended learning.

With stakeholder involvement, OSSE has developed and adopted voluntary teacher, principal, and professional development performance standards as a way of providing guidance to the LEAs and schools that are developing evaluation systems. The standards reflect the skills that teachers are expected to have in order to teach the CCSS. OSSE has also developed teacher performance standards based on the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards (InTASC), promising models from other states, the CCSS, and existing LEA standards. OSSE has developed school leadership performance standards based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), New Leaders for New Schools, and promising models from other states as well as LEA standards. For the professional development standards, OSSE drew from Learning Forward's professional development standards, which articulate a vision of professional development that is continuous, job-embedded, and part of the school day.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA's plan include sufficient involvement of teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines?*

Stakeholder Input

OSSE received input from the RTTT Human Capital Task Force on revisions to develop the evaluation system guidelines and also received feedback from other key stakeholders. Beginning in SY 2012–13, the Human Capital Task Force expanded to include non-RTTT LEA representatives. OSSE also created two new advisory groups—a group of teachers and a group of principals from both public charter schools and DCPS—that provided input on the development of teacher, principal, and professional development standards. These groups met to review drafts of these documents and provide feedback. They will reconvene any time major modifications to the documents are proposed. Finally, OSSE posted the final requirements for all teacher and principal evaluation systems and conducted webinars and meetings to educate LEAs about the standards and requirements.

Summary

By proposing and implementing a system of teacher and principal evaluation requirements OSSE has raised the bar for the quality of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. OSSE continues to support LEAs in developing rigorous evaluation systems by providing professional development and technical assistance and by identifying high-quality resources and materials that provide teachers and principals with meaningful feedback.

For additional information, see Attachment 14: Principle 3 Documents

- *Definition of Teacher Value-Added Model*
- *Definition of School-Wide Growth Model*

3.B Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

3.B Provide the SEA's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the SEA's guidelines likely to result in support for all teachers, including teachers who are specialists working with students with disabilities and English Learners and general classroom teachers with these students in their classrooms that will enable them to improve their instructional practice?*

OSSE will coordinate with DCPS and PCSB to ensure that all Title I schools meet the evaluation system requirements; DCPS schools through adherence to State-adopted guidelines, and charter schools through compliance with Principle 3 in the exercise of their flexibility to develop individual evaluation systems. Rigorous evaluation systems will permit schools to better focus on teacher and principal needs and areas for improvement to maximize student learning and improve student outcomes. OSSE will also require that schools continue to demonstrate how they involve teachers and principals in the development of these systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for reviewing and approving an LEA's teacher and principal evaluation and support systems to ensure that they are consistent with the SEA's guidelines and will result in the successful implementation of such systems?*

DCPS will continue to ensure its teacher and principal evaluation systems address each of the state guidelines (which will meet the ED's ESEA flexibility requirements) and submit them to OSSE by June 30, of each year. DCPS will provide evidence of meeting each ESEA flexibility requirements. In accordance with ED's comprehensive review guidelines (as part of protocol B monitoring), DCPS must also illustrate how they evaluate implementation, how they use this information to inform mid-course corrections and ensure sustainability

for effective practices. OSSE staff will review the plans and provide feedback. OSSE review will focus on ensuring that the evaluation system meets state requirements, and ensures continuous improvement and sustainability.

All charter LEAs receiving Title I funds must continue to submit teacher and principal evaluation system documentation to PCSB for review and submission to OSSE for informational purposes annually. . OSSE will monitor PCSB to ensure that the review process is comprehensive and meets ED's guidance for implementation.

The PCSB review must ensure that each LEA meets all of the federal principle 3 requirements, or has a corrective action plan to do so. For a charter LEA to meet this standard, it must provide evidence of the following:

- Using systems, processes, and data to ensure that evaluation and support systems are positively impacting teacher and principal practice;
- Using systems and processes to ensure that adjustments and revisions are being made to improve teacher evaluation and support systems; and
- Continual outreach to principals, teachers, and stakeholders to identify implementation challenges in order to strengthen principal and teacher evaluation systems.

OSSE will review PCSB's monitoring tools, guidance, and practices against ED's standards of comprehensive review. If PCSB's review does not meet the Department's standards, OSSE retains the authority to directly monitor LEAs that have either not submitted requisite evidence or have multiple findings with no corrective action plan in place.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that teachers working with special populations of students, such as students with disabilities and English Learners, are included in the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?*

LEAs will be required to evaluate all teachers, including those working with special populations of students, such as students with disabilities and ELLs. OSSE will collect data related to teacher evaluations only as sufficient to ensure that evaluation systems are implemented. Collected individually-identifiable information will not be publicly disclosed by OSSE.

As part of this process, PCSB will review Title I charter LEA's plans for including student achievement and growth measures in evaluations. DCPS will continue to implement its plans for including student achievement and growth in teacher and principal evaluations. Beginning SY2015-16, LEAs will have the option to pilot the state model evaluation system or continue using their existing approved system.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA describe the process it will use to ensure that all measures used in an LEA's evaluation and support systems are valid, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA (i.e., process for ensuring inter-rater reliability)?*

All DC LEAs are required to maintain evaluation systems based on valid measures, and train evaluators to ensure inter-rater reliability. OSSE will provide guidance on how to ensure validity and will collect assurances from PCSB that charter LEAs use valid measures in implementing teacher and leader evaluations, and train evaluators on use of their evaluation systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that an LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems with the involvement of teachers and principals?*

As mentioned above, PCSB and DCPS will be responsible for collecting data from each eligible LEA demonstrating that the evaluation systems were developed with the involvement of teachers and principals, and will submit evidence of this involvement to OSSE during yearly monitoring.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA plan for providing adequate guidance and other technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to lead to successful implementation?*

Upon submission of LEA evidence of implementation, OSSE will provide recommendations and feedback. OSSE will also conduct regular trainings to LEAs participating in the model state evaluation system. Trainings will include the following topics: teacher instructional competencies, teacher observation feedback, student learning objectives, professional responsibilities, and teacher improvement plans.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA's plan likely to be successful in ensuring that LEAs meet the timeline requirements by either (1) piloting evaluation and support systems no later than the 2013- 2014 school year and implementing evaluation and support systems consistent with the requirements described above no later than the 2014-2015 school year; or (2) implementing these systems no later than the 2013-2014 school year?*
Do timelines reflect a clear understanding of what steps will be necessary and reflect a logical sequencing and spacing of the key steps necessary to implement evaluation and support systems consistent with the required timelines?

Table 3.B.i presents key milestones for the implementation of the evaluation systems as discussed.

Table 3.B.i. Key Milestones for the Implementation of Evaluation Systems

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Status			Lessons Learned

OSSE revises RTTT evaluation requirements to meet ESEA flexibility waiver requirements	June 2012	Complete	Draft evaluation guidelines	Two staff members	None
OSSE seeks feedback on evaluation guidelines from LEAs, Human Capital Task Force, and Title I Committee of Practitioners	June 2012	Complete	Feedback notes from LEAs, Human Capital Task Force, Title I COP and LEA leaders	Two staff members	None
Solicit members for advisory groups to develop voluntary teacher, leader, and professional development standards	June 2012	Complete	List of members	One staff member to solicit volunteers	
Submit evaluation guidelines to USDE for peer review	June 25, 2012	Complete	Proposed evaluation guidelines	Two staff members	None
Receive feedback from ED on the evaluation guidelines	June–July 2012	ED	Feedback from the ED	ED staff and peer reviewers	

Finalize, distribute, and post evaluation guidelines	As soon as they are approved by the ED	Complete	Final guidelines that have been distributed to all Title I LEAs and posted on OSSE's website	Two staff members	
Develop voluntary teacher, leader, and professional development standards	July–August 2012	Complete	Draft standards	Two staff members to review model standards and draft OSSE standards and then manage the process for getting input and revising the standards	Teacher and professional development standards will continue to be revised and developed in conjunction with the state model system
Adopt educator performance and professional development standards	September 2012	Complete	Performance standards	One staff member to finalize performance standards	None
Conduct trainings on evaluation requirements and voluntary standards	October–November 2012	Complete	Training materials and attendance lists	One staff member to conduct trainings	None

Provide technical assistance as needed to LEAs creating or revising their evaluation systems	December 2012– March 2013	Complete	Technical assistance log of issues and responses	One staff member	None
Create website with resources on teacher and leader evaluation	December 2012– March 2013	Complete	Website address	One staff member	LEARNDC will now serve as both a repository for best practices and the state model system
Charter LEAs submit evaluation system plans to PCSB for review and approval	By April-May, 2013	Complete	LEA Evaluation System Plans	LEA staff	None
PCSB and DCPS submit evidence that their LEAs' systems comply with the applicable standards	July 2013	Complete	Evaluation Review Tracking Sheet	Two staff members to conduct the review process	ED's standard for continuous improvement will now be incorporated

OSSE sends approval notices to PCSB and DCPS regarding their evaluation systems/plans	By August , 2013	Complete	Approval notices to schools	One staff member	None
Non-RTTT LEAs pilot evaluation systems/full implementation for RTTT LEAs	School year 2013–14	Complete	Approved Evaluation Plans, Title I monitoring visits	Staff members to conduct monitoring visits	None
Full implementation of evaluation systems for all Title I LEAs	School year 2014–15	Complete	Title I monitoring visits	Staff members to conduct monitoring visits	None

Summary

Through its state guidelines, OSSE assists LEAs directly and indirectly through PCSB with the implementation of rigorous teacher and leader evaluation systems. These systems offer frequent and timely feedback and are used to inform professional development needs and personnel decisions. With higher quality information about teacher and leader performance, schools are better able to implement strategies that increase teacher and leader effectiveness and increase student achievement, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps.

This ESEA flexibility renewal request in its entirety supports OSSE's belief that students come first and effective teachers and leaders directly affect student learning. This belief drives OSSE's efforts to remove barriers to education by providing the necessary support to teachers and principals.

ESEA FLEXIBILITY WAIVER RENEWAL APPLCATION ATTACHMENT 1 – COPY OF LEA NOTICE

From: Superintendent, OSSE (OSSE)
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 7:42 PM
Subject: OSSE February Updates for LEA Leaders

Greetings LEA Leaders,

I am writing to share some key updates and resources with you for the month of February:

1) **PARCC Technology Infrastructure Trial Materials:** The best thing schools can do to test their technology readiness for PARCC is to perform an infrastructure trial as soon as possible, with the same devices and technology setup they will have on the day of testing. The infrastructure trial will allow schools to check the correct configuration of each of their devices and their network for a secure TestNav environment, and make sure staff know exactly what tech systems will look and feel like on the day of testing. The infrastructure trial can help your school pinpoint technical hurdles before the day of testing. The infrastructure trial can also be an optional chance for students to take a practice test in a secure testing environment. After you conduct an infrastructure trial, please fill out this survey, to inform OSSE of your experience and help support all DC schools in preparing for PARCC: http://bit.ly/1DY9PRx.

   Attached, and posted on http://parcc.pearson.com/technology-setup/, are the infrastructure trial quick guide, the full guide to doing infrastructure trials, and a map document to all the technology resources available online to support PARCC implementation. Useful documents to consult in the infrastructure trial include:

   - **Technology Bulletin - Hot Topics**
     - http://parcc.pearson.com/bulletins/
     - The purpose of this document is to highlight the trending topics and what their resolution or status may be.
   - **TestNav Known Behaviors**
     - On the Technology Setup page under the Technology User Guides drop-down http://parcc.pearson.com/technology-setup/
     - The purpose of this document is to outline the known and expected behaviors of the different devices, browsers, item types, accessibility features, and tools.

- **Browser Specific Setup Guides - With additional "Verification" Steps added**
  - On the Technology Setup page under the Technology User Guides drop-down http://parcc.pearson.com/technology-setup/
  - These documents provide some detailed instructions for ensuring each browser is setup correctly to allow java, disable pop-ups, etc. as well as the steps to validate that the setup instructions have been followed correctly.

All setup for the infrastructure trials happens on the Pearson Access Next Training Site at https://trng.pearsonaccessnext.com/. LEA Assessment contacts have access to this site and may generate additional access for their staff members.

If your LEA encounters technical difficulties during the infrastructure trial, call Pearson Technical Support to help you resolve these issues at 1-888-493-9888. If you do not receive a timely solution to an urgent problem and would like your response to be elevated, be sure to record the ticket number of your problem (this should also be emailed to you by Pearson), and log an escalation request here: http://bit.ly/1Cex9KK. After the infrastructure trial, please give us your feedback here, so we can identify common problems and disseminate solutions: http://bit.ly/1DY9PRx.

2) Draft ESEA Waiver Renewal Application Public Comment Period (February 12- March 13, 2015):

We welcome your comments on the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE's) proposal for a new Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver for the District of Columbia, which will be available for public comment beginning tomorrow. The posted version will be a "track changes" version that denotes differences from the existing ESEA Waiver across its four principles. The Waiver also includes an introduction that focuses mainly on feedback and consultation processes. The introduction section will be further updated following the public comment period. To download the 'redline' version of the ESEA Waiver, click **here**.

The substantive updates in this draft application include:

1. DC's transition to the Next Generation Assessments (NGAs);
2. Increased flexibility to take high school level courses in middle school;
3. Updated language related to OSSE's State System of Support (SSOS);

4. A requested pause in school classification during the assessment transition; and
5. A proposed pause in the use of state assessment growth data for teacher evaluations.

OSSE has also begun a public engagement process related to discussing proposed updates to the Waiver and other planning efforts. To learn more about how to participate in this process, and to view the updated calendar of events, please go to: http://osse.dc.gov/service/elementary-secondary-education-act-esea. If you have any questions, please email Etai Mizrav, Education Policy and Compliance Specialist, at etai.mizrav@dc.gov.

3) Enterprise Grants Management System Support:

Beginning this month, OSSE will produce a monthly report for each LEA leader that provides a snapshot of the status of all grants in the EGMS system. While this data is accessible via the system, we believe that providing the snapshot will assist your LEA with reviewing funds. The snapshot will be like a monthly bank statement- it will show the total amount allocated to your LEA across grants, provide a status of your payments, and identify balances.

We are going to issue this report internally twice a month and ask grant managers on the program side to review the reports, identify challenges, and proactively manage issues when they see that things are stuck. In this way we will not wait for LEAs to share that there is a problem and instead will actively work to help you navigate challenges.

Last, we are tracking our own progress related to grant development and payment timeliness to eliminate distribution backlogs and ensure timely access to funds.

Please feel free to contact me directly with specific questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Amy Maisterra
Interim State Superintendent of Education

In addition below is an example is an email that was sent to every LEA in the District of Columbia inviting them for a personal walk through of the waiver renewal application.

From: OSSE Communications [mailto:osse.communications@dc.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 3:05 PM
To: Carol Evans-Turner
Cc: Mizrav, Etai (OSSE)
Subject: DC ESEA Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback

Dear Imagine Southeast PCS team,

As promised, we released the draft of the DC ESEA Waiver renewal application for public comments. It is available on our **Waiver renewal website**.

Due to the length of the document and the fact that we want to make sure we are considering your feedback on all of the sections that were revised, as well as those that were not, we invite you to a one-hour Imagine Southeast PCS/OSSE walk-through of the application and initial feedback gathering with the authors of the current version. In partnership, we want to create an opportunity to ensure that nothing was missed, language is framed appropriately and potential issues are flagged for larger conversations.

Please indicate whether this meeting is something you'll be interested in and we will work together to find a time of your convenience. It is our priority that this proposal will be informed and influenced by your feedback.

Thank you,

Office of the State Superintendent of Education
District of Columbia

District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

ESEA FLEXIBILITY WAIVER RENEWAL APPLCATION ATTACHMENT 2

Comments from Local Education Agencies

District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Comments from the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board

PCSB's Comments on Redline Version of ESEA Waiver – Released February 2015

PCSB submits the following comments related to OSSE's February 2015 revision to the 2012 ESEA Waiver, to be submitted to the US Department of Education in March 2015. While PCSB has included its feedback on Principles 1 through 3 throughout this document, PCSB would like to highlight the following concerns as its greatest priorities in the Waiver to be submitted to the US Department of Education in March of 2015:

Please note that unless otherwise stated or cited, page numbers and "text" refer to the redline version of the 2012 ESEA Waiver on the OSSE website.[1]

1) The most recent revision fails to clarify the status of closing schools, despite clear federal guidance that:

> *"When a charter school authorizer has indicated that it intends to decline to renew or intends to revoke a charter for a particular charter school based on lack of progress towards improved student academic outcomes or other significant issues cited by the authorizer, the authorizer's decision to do so supersedes any designation from the SEA that such a school is a focus or priority school, as consistent with any applicable State law.[2]"*
>
> **PCSB recommends incorporating the clarity provided by federal guidance into the sections on focus and priority schools.**

2) The most recent revision would freeze both new identifications AND exit existing Focus/Priority school based on the rationale of pausing in the use of new assessments.

> **PCSB recommends instead making revisions to Principle 2 in order to:**
>
> a) **freeze new identifications of Focus and Priority schools in to focus resources on the many schools already identified;**
> b) **move to a cycle of identifying new Focus and Priority schools only every three years; and**
> c) **continue to exit current Focus and Priority schools based on progress on the new state assessment.**

3) The most recent revision fails to clarify the timeline for OSSE intervention for Priority schools.

> **While page 104 of the ESEA Waiver says that a Priority school has three full years of implementation to exit Priority status, and PCSB's MOU with OSSE stipulates that PCSB has three years to implement a Priority plan, OSSE's revision on page 101 is not in alignment with this. The revision limits to two years the amount of time a Priority school has to implement its plan and show progress before it may exit status.**

[1] http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/service_content/attachments/DC%20ESEA%20Flexibility%20Renewal%20Public%20Comments%20-%20Redline%20as%20of%2002.12.15%20bkc.pdf
[2] http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/esea-flexibility-faqs-addendum4.doc

Principle 1: College and Career Readiness

1A) **Assessments for K-2**

PCSB recommends striking the phrase "that may be utilized on a statewide basis." This wording may leave the door open to requiring specific K-2 formative assessments. Charter LEAs have exclusive control over their curriculum and instruction, and formative assessments are part of this domain.

Text- page 40:

Additionally DC Division of Early Learning has joined the North Carolina Enhanced Assessment Consortia developing ~~assessments for~~ K-2 formative assessments that may be utilized on a statewide basis to assess students holistically in the following domains: physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches toward learning; language and literacy development. and cognitive development and general knowledge.

RECOMMENDED REVISION

Additionally DC Division of Early Learning has joined the North Carolina Enhanced Assessment Consortia developing ~~assessments for~~ K-2 formative assessments ~~that may be utilized on a statewide basis~~ to assess students holistically in the following domains: physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches toward learning; language and literacy development. and cognitive development and general knowledge.

1B) **College Readiness Metrics**

PCSB recommends omitting this revision. Discussions around additional accountability metrics should be part of the broader, more long-term decision around revisions to ESEA accountability as a whole. Furthermore, PCSB is concerned that the additional metrics may create burdensome reporting requirements for schools.

Text- page 46:

College Readiness Metrics
OSSE is improving public reporting of college readiness metrics at the state and LEA level on our public facing, LEARN DC site. The impetus to update the college readiness metrics on Learn DC stems from the fact that information previously housed on the site provided limited information on college, as it only reported on student participation in AP, IB, PSAT, and SAT exams. PSCE conducted a literature review of factors related to college readiness, as well as research around best practices for reporting these metrics, and did a cross-national assessment of what other states were including in their indicators to develop the current proposal for new metrics. In addition, OSSE engaged extensively with stakeholders to agree on the metrics and the business rules around the metrics.

The proposed new metrics for Academic Year 2014-2015 include:

- Percent of students scoring "college ready" on SAT (1550) or ACT (18-23) – LEA and School Level
- Percent of students taking IB exams – LEA and School Level
- Percent of students scoring 3+ on AP Test – LEA and School Level
- Percent of students scoring 4+ on IB Test – LEA and School Level
- Percent of high school students completing FAFSA- LEA and School Level
- Percent of high school students completing OneApp- LEA and School Level
- Advanced Courses Offered (Honors, AP, IB, dual enrollment) – Optional self-report by LEA/School – LEA and School Level
- Percent of students who apply to at least one postsecondary program - LEA and School Level
- Percent of students who enroll in a postsecondary program within 6 months - LEA and School Level
- Percent of students who enroll in a postsecondary program within 12 months - LEA and School Level
- Percent of students who enroll in a postsecondary program within 18 months - LEA and School Level
- Percent of students who earn BA within 6 years – State Level
- Percent of students who earn AA within 3 years – State Level
- And for Academic Year 2015-2016 Percent of enrolled students who earn BA in 6 years – LEA and State Level
- Percent of enrolled students who earn AA in 3 years – LEA and School Level

RECOMMENDED REVISION:

Delete the entire passage above.

Principle 2: State Developed Differentiated Accountability and Support

2A) **Freezing the identification of Focus and Priority Schools, and giving schools an opportunity to exit status.**

Guidance issued by the US Department of Education on November 13, 2014 requires that SEAs[3]:

> *"Submit either (i) its updated list of priority schools based on the most recent available data, for implementation beginning in the 2015–2016 school year, or (ii) an assurance that it will provide an updated list of priority schools based on school year 2014–2015 data no later than January 31, 2016, for implementation beginning no later than the 2016–2017 school year;"*

The guidance requests essentially the same thing for Focus schools.

PCSB recommends that OSSE omit this revision and revise to reflect identification of Focus and Priority schools in three year cycles in order to focus resources on existing (previously identified) Focus and Priority schools and so that existing Focus and Priority schools have the time to implement and see the impact of improvement strategies.

PCSB proposes that schools:

a) **may exit Focus status if PARCC scores are within the 75th percentile of the state average for the subgroup for which the school was identified.**

b) **may exit Priority status if overall PARCC scores are within the 75th percentile of the state average proficiency rate overall.**

Text- page 90:

~~For the 2015-2016 school years, OSSE will use the same list of Priority and Focus schools as 2014-2015.~~ In the 2014-2015 school year ~~During 2014-2015~~, OSSE will administer a set of new assessments in ELA, Math and Science, and would will detach high stakes decisions from the results of this administration, by pausing school classification. ~~using the 2014-2015 list~~. For report on a new list of classifications following the second administration of the assessments – these new classifications would apply for the 2016-2017 school year.

RECOMMENDED REVISION

~~For the 2015-2016 school years, OSSE will use the same list of Priority and Focus schools as 2014-2015.~~ There are currently [27] Focus and [30] Priority schools identified. In order to focus available resources on these schools OSSE proposes freezing new classifications until January 31, 2017, and then adding new schools to the list of Priority and Focus schools every three years thereafter.

In the 2014-2015 school year ~~During 2014-2015~~, OSSE will administer a set of new assessments in ELA, Math and Science. Current Priority schools may exit this status if they score at or above the 75th percentile of all DC schools on the new assessment. Current Focus schools may exit this status if they score at or above the 75th percentile of all DC schools on the new assessment for the subgroup for which the school was identified.

[3] http://www2.ed.gov/policy/eseaflex/secretary-letters/cssorenewalltr.html

2B) Development and Dissemination of Additional Data

PCSB recommends striking the language "improvements and additions to instructional staff data to come into compliance with federal requirements." This language is vague without referencing the specific federal requirements. Furthermore, PCSB would like to clarify that public charter schools do not need to submit identifiable teacher-level data to the state, and would be unwilling to do so as part of the Equitable Access initiative.

Text- pages 63-64:

The DC OSSE will continue to report on the information required by federal law, including student progress on measurable objectives, test participation rates, graduation rates for adjusted cohorts, and other academic indicators. In addition to these federally required report card metrics, OSSE seeks opportunities to provide additional information beyond that required for the NCLB report card.

Data updates (in addition to the public charter sector LEA report card) include:

- College readiness metrics negotiated with LEA stakeholders;
- Improvements and additions to instructional staff data to come into compliance with federal requirements.
- Metrics related to our local Healthy Schools Act, also negotiated with LEA stakeholders; and
- An additional functional ability to download data in CSV format to allow for more sophisticated analysis and comparisons by users.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

- ~~Improvements and additions to instructional staff data to come into compliance with federal requirements.~~

2C) Statewide Network of Tiered Recognition, Accountability and Support

PCSB recommends clarification that the Title I requirement of the 20% set-aside be limited to the portion of funds committed to the LEA's focus or priority campus, rather than 20% of the entire LEA's budget.

Text- page 65:

Priority Schools	• Ongoing monitoring of DCPS and PCSB and school implementation • 20% Title I set-aside to support planning and implementation efforts • Access to 1003 (a) funds • Professional development for leaders of schools identified for OSSE intervention • SIG monitoring and technical assistance (for participating schools)
Focus Schools	• Ongoing monitoring of DCPS and PCSB and school implementation • 20% Title I set-aside to support planning and implementation efforts • Access to 1003 (a) funds • Professional development for leaders of schools identified for OSSE intervention

SUGGESTED CHANGE

Priority Schools

- 20% Title I set-aside to support planning and implementation efforts. (In the case of a multi-campus LEA, only funds reserved for those campuses designated Priority will be subject to this set-aside.)

Focus Schools

- 20% Title I set-aside to support planning and implementation efforts. (In the case of a multi-campus LEA, only funds reserved for those campuses designated Focus will be subject to this set-aside.)

2D) Priority Schools.

PCSB is extremely concerned that this section omits critical clarity on the status of closing schools, despite the clear federal guidance. In the redline version of the Waiver, there is no clarity given to the status of closing schools, despite the clear federal guidance that once an authorizer decides to close a school, that school ceases to be a Focus or Priority school, and the school should instead focus on closure activities.

> *"When a charter school authorizer has indicated that it intends to decline to renew or intends to revoke a charter for a particular charter school based on lack of progress towards improved student academic outcomes or other significant issues cited by the authorizer, the authorizer's decision to do so supersedes any designation from the SEA that such a school is a focus or priority school, as consistent with any applicable State law.[4]"*

Text- page 93:

Priority schools will be required to implement all seven turnaround principles using intervention strategies that are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

PROPOSED REVISION

Priority schools will be required to implement all seven turnaround principles using intervention strategies that are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress. The only exception will be for priority charter schools that are closing. In these cases, consistent with Department guidance, PCSB will focus its efforts on

a) ensuring continuity of quality educational services prior to the school's closing; and,
b) seeking to arrange quality educational alternatives in the coming school year for students in the closing school.

[4]http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/esea-flexibility-faqs-addendum4.doc

2E) Inconsistencies in SEA Intervention

The text on page 101 is inconsistent with the timeline outlined later on page 104 of the Waiver, which gives Priority schools three years of implementation to exit status.

It is nonsensical that the waiver would require a school to be in priority status for three years and assign OSSE oversight in the third year, when even the strongest performing school under PCSB's oversight would not exit before the end of year 3. While OSSE has said that it would be willing to exit priority schools that made sufficient progress prior to this three year timeline, both the waiver and the MOU permit a three-year improvement plan. It is similarly nonsensical that the school could demonstrate progress (without fully exiting) within the permitted timeline only to have OSSE intervene (and potentially disrupt improvement efforts already underway).

Moreover, the MOU between PCSB and OSSE states, at page 4

II. PCSB shall…
I. Develop and implement in any public charter school identified by the DC OSSE as Priority a three-year plan that includes meaningful interventions…"

This inconsistency will lead to schools having to switch oversight in the midst of improvement efforts, regardless of progress the school is making. Even though they may be making progress towards exiting Priority status, schools may be penalized by OSSE oversight through rejection of that school's improvement plan.

Text- page 101:

If a priority school fails to meet the exit criteria after two full years of implementation, the DC OSSE will assume approval authority of the improvement plans submitted by the DCPS and the PCSB for Priority schools. In order to ensure increased rigor of interventions and supports in Priority schools that have not made sufficient progress to exit Priority status, the DC OSSE has established the Learning Support Network.

Text- page 104:

If a Priority school meets the exit criteria at the end of each of the originally planned three years of implementation, then the school will exit priority status at the end of the original three-year implementation period.

SUGGESTED REVISION

Text- page 101:

If a priority school fails to meet the exit criteria after ~~two~~ three full years of implementation, the DC OSSE will assume approval authority of the improvement plans submitted by the DCPS and the PCSB for Priority schools. In order to ensure increased rigor of interventions and supports in Priority schools that have not made sufficient progress to exit Priority status, the DC OSSE has established the Learning Support Network.

PCSB believes that schools should be given three full years to implement their priority improvement plan before OSSE intervenes. PCSB would be open to optional support for schools during this implementation period.

2F) Monitoring of PCSB

PCSB recommends omitting the added language or adding language clarifying OSSE's commitment to identify Focus and Priority school by the start of the school year.

In the past OSSE has been late in identifying schools. If this were to continue, it would be difficult or impossible for PCSB to submit quality reports by the deadlines indicated in the new text. In particular, PCSB's would not be able to conduct Qualitative Site Reviews in the case of a late designation. PCSB has a rigorous qualitative site review process and prides itself on preparation and planning both with teams visiting schools and with the school leaders to ensure a smooth operation of site reviews. Without timely identification of these schools, coordination among visiting teams and school leaders is challenging.

Text- page 108 for Focus schools
Similar Text for Priority schools on page 99:

Mid-year reports from DCPS and PCSB will be due January 31 of each year. and end-of-year reports will be due June 30 of each year. This reporting will support DC OSSE's oversight of school improvement.

SUGGESTED REVISION

Mid-year reports from DCPS and PCSB will be due January 31 of each year for schools that have been identified as Focus/Priority no later than the beginning of the school year. End-of-year reports will be due June 30 of each year. This reporting will support DC OSSE's oversight of school improvement.

Principle 3: Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

3A) Flexibility to Develop and Implement Evaluation and Support Systems

PCSB recommends that this added language be struck. PCSB and OSSE had previously agreed to a regime that afforded charter schools the maximum possible flexibility in designing their evaluation and support systems. Adding this language of "continuous improvement" injects a new and unknown possible set of compliance requirements that we cannot accept.

Text – Page 126

OSSE will, therefore, allow District public charter schools the flexibility to develop and implement evaluation and support systems that meet all of the elements of Principle 3 including ED's definition of continuous improvement, but that do not necessarily adhere to the DC OSSE.

SUGGESTED REVISION

OSSE will, therefore, allow District public charter schools the flexibility to develop and implement evaluation and support systems that meet all of the elements of Principle 3 ~~including ED's definition of continuous improvement~~, but that do not necessarily adhere to the DC OSSE.

3B) Modifying State Requirements

PCSB would like this last sentence to be struck, or would like added clarity that says that charter LEAs do not have to follow the state guidelines, and instead, follow the federal guidelines related to principal and teacher evaluation systems.

As with the comment in 3A, above, PCSB and OSSE had previously agreed to a regime that afforded charter schools the maximum possible flexibility in designing their evaluation and support systems. Adding this language of evaluation systems which "adhere to these guidelines" injects a new and unknown possible set of compliance requirements that we cannot accept.

Text – Page 131

~~As noted above, in developing guidelines for compliance with new evaluation and support system requirements under Principle 3, the DC OSSE will build on the RTTT evaluation requirements to address the ED's ESEA flexibility requirements and to reflect lessons learned from the first year of implementation of the requirements~~. DC OSSE built off of lessons learned to develop ~~These~~ guidelines ~~will~~ that ensured that the District of Columbia's new evaluation systems offer reliable, valid, and complete data to inform personnel decisions. They also provide leaders and managers with the information and tools they can use to offer support to teachers, and create opportunities for them to pursue professional development and growth. Each LEA must continue to implement evaluation systems which adhere to these guidelines.

SUGGESTION REVISIONS

~~Each LEA must continue to implement evaluation systems which adhere to these guidelines.~~

3C) Validity of Measures

PCSB would like to clarify OSSE's expectations for its validity analyses. Since the implementation of Principle 3, PCSB has worked with all charter LEAs to ensure that they meet federal requirements. Schools use a range of valid measures as a component of teacher performance, including state assessments, the PCSB PMF score, and growth assessments such as NWEA MAP. At the outset of implementation of Principle 3, OSSE told PCSB that it was in the process of developing a handbook related to performance based assessments and their use in teacher evaluation systems, particularly for teachers of non-academic subjects, like music and art. Many charter LEAs committed to using the forthcoming handbook as they developed valid measures for evaluating teachers in cases where the state assessment did not cover a particular teacher's subject area. PCSB will ensure that schools not using standardized assessments continue to follow OSSE's guidelines around student learning objectives and performance based assessments.

PCSB is encouraged by the prospect of OSSE's development of standardized tools and procedures related to the model teacher evaluation system, and will encourage schools who need additional assessments to evaluate teacher performance to follow these procedures; otherwise, PCSB will continue to require schools to identify valid assessments to be used as a component of a teacher's evaluation.

Text – Page 133

Ensuring validity of measures: The DC OSSE ~~will~~ has analyze~~d~~ the relationship between student achievement and teacher and leader evaluation ratings for RTTT LEAs by analyzing the correlation between teacher and leader evaluation ratings and student growth and proficiency in a school. PCSB ~~will~~ conducts validity analyses for non-RTTT charter LEAs and DCPS will continue to conduct this analysis for schools. The DC OSSE will also provide exemplars of valid observation rubrics through the state model evaluation system that LEAs can choose to adopt.

SUGGESTED REVISION

Ensuring validity of measures: The DC OSSE ~~will~~ has analyze~~d~~ the relationship between student achievement and teacher and leader evaluation ratings for RTTT LEAs by analyzing the correlation between teacher and leader evaluation ratings and student growth and proficiency in a school. ~~PCSB will conducts validity analyses for non-RTTT charter LEAs and DCPS will continue to conduct this analysis for schools.~~ The DC OSSE will also provide exemplars of valid observation rubrics through the state model evaluation system that LEAs can choose to adopt.

4) Submission of Principal and Teacher Evaluation Systems

Text – Page 142

PCSB recommends striking the language that says "and to OSSE for information purposes annually" and adding "and submission to OSSE," to clarify that PCSB is responsible for submitting charter LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems to OSSE. PCSB has provided OSSE with charter LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems since the implementation of Principle 3, along with PCSB's feedback to charter schools around their evaluation systems. Both OSSE and PCSB have committed to reducing the burden on schools related to document submission, and striking this language is in alignment with that commitment.

Text – Page 142

All charter LEAs receiving Title I funds ~~will need to create~~ must continue to submit teacher and principal evaluation system~~s~~ documentation to PCSB for review and to OSSE for informational purposes annually. ~~that address ED's ESEA flexibility requirements and submit them to PCSB pursuant to the deadline established by the charter authorizer. RTTT charter LEAs receiving Title I funds will only have to provide evidence to address the four new criteria required by the ESEA flexibility request that were not already required by RTTT. The PCSB review will focus on ensuring that the evaluation systems meet Principle 3.~~

SUGGESTED REVISION

All charter LEAs receiving Title I funds ~~will need to create~~ must continue to submit teacher and principal evaluation system~~s~~ documentation to PCSB for review and submission ~~and~~ to OSSE for informational purposes annually.

PCSB's MOU with OSSE, outlining respective responsibilities with regard to the ESEA Waiver

PCSB would like to request a number of revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that it has with OSSE around the implementation of the ESEA Waiver.

1) PCSB would like to clarify its role in providing schools with the "tools for LEA and school-based improvement teams to assess their needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps," (Waiver, page 91). PCSB does not provide direct technical assistance to schools, and any technical assistance provided by OSSE must be voluntary. Instead we provide feedback based on our observations of the implementation status of the school's own plans and of the quality of instruction and of the learning environment. Our approach to school flexibility and autonomy with regard to school improvement has led to improvement and closure where necessary:

    - All of the Focus schools identified in school year 2012-13 have either exited status or have closed.
    - One of the Priority schools identified in school year 2012-13 is facing closure; the other is currently subject to a strict set of targets related to school performance, and will face consequences if it does not improve.
    - One out of five Focus schools identified in school year 2013-14 fully exited status; one school made progress towards exit; one school was closed.
    - Two out of five Focus schools identified in school year 2013-14 experienced significant growth in their Focus subgroups (though they did not meet the criteria for progress towards exit).

2) PCSB would like to clarify and emphasize that Focus schools should have two full years to implement their Focus improvement plans before OSSE intervention. Page 111 of the Waiver says:

    "If a Focus school fails to meet the exit criteria after two full years of implementation, the DC OSSE will assume approval authority of school level plans and supports."

    PCSB agrees with this language and wants to ensure that schools truly have two full years to fully implement strategies before OSSE intervention. In the past, schools have not been officially notified of their Focus status until well into the school year (after appeals), and in some cases, halfway through the school year. PCSB wants to ensure that OSSE's delays in identification do not curtail the amount of time a school has to implement its Focus plan before OSSE intervention.

District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Comments from the District of Columbia Public Schools

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Form-Redline Version: DCPS Comments/Feedback

The following are DCPS' comments/feedback on OSSE's revisions to Principles 1-3 of the ESEA Flexibility Renewal Form released on February 11, 2015. The comments/feedback are based on the redline version of the 2012 ESEA Waiver on OSSE's website (http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/service_content/attachments/DC%20ESEA%20Flexibility%20Renewal%20Public%20Comments%20-%20Redline%20as%20of%2002.12.15%20bkc.pdf).

DCPS Comments & Feedback

The comments and feedback are listed in order of appearance in the redline document. DCPS priorities are bolded in red:

Principle 1

Page(s)	Comments/Feedback
26	In Table 1.b.i, for 2014-15 of the outlined timeline for transition to college and career standard, it should specify that the science exam is being field tested in 2014-2015 and will not be used for accountability until 2015-16.
37	Other Assessments: Need more clarity around the sub-scores for writing and how it will be used for accountability.
38, 74	**Inclusion of Science assessment in accountability: Need clarification if science is going to be a growth measure and if so, how OSSE will measure growth for science. How will OSSE calculate growth when science is only offered in grades 5, 8, and HS (also located on p. 74 under Principle 2)?**
40	**Revise language around K-2 formative assessments that they will be made available for statewide use and the LEAs will have the option to utilize.**
41	Middle School students taking High School math assessments: Need more clarification on the process of notifying OSSE of MS students taking the HS assessments. What is timeline? What information would they require?
43	Supporting Educators: strike the language around providing *on-site* professional development to schools. OSSE should provide trainings to the LEAs and the LEAs will make them available to all schools including Focus and Priority schools.
46	The document indicates that a gap analysis was conducted in August 2012 to identify areas of improvement/need as determined by DC CAS scores and the grade correlation. Was this made available to the LEAs to review?
52-53	College Readiness Metrics: OSSE should clarify how the college readiness metrics will be used, that these metrics will be used for public reporting purposes only (to be displayed on Learn DC), not for accountability.

Principle 2

Page(s)	Comments/Feedback
58, 77, 84, 112, 114	**Use of AMOs in accountability: Need more clarity on how OSSE will calculate the AMOs using PARCC. Is OSSE doing a correlation analysis between DC CAS and PARCC? We also need more guidance on how OSSE is planning on using the AMOs moving forward at the LEA and school level. In addition, on p.112, one of the exit criteria for Focus schools is "its lowest-performing subgroup have met their AMOs for two years and/or have demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years as measured by the accountability index." What are the exact business rules for this determination? DCPS recommends that AMOs no longer be used for accountability since they are not very meaningful targets for any of our schools. It also has the potential to increase the number of schools being identified for additional support, in addition to almost half of DCPS who've already been identified as Focus and Priority schools.**
63	Development and Dissemination of Additional Data: Need more clarification on the types of instructional staff data that LEA would be required to submit to OSSE. Until this clarity is made, DCPS recommends striking the second bullet point—"Improvements and additions to instructional staff data to come into compliance with federal requirements"
67, 101, 123	**Providing Targeted Support: LEA Learning Support Network: Need more clarification on how OSSE will "build upon what has proven effective in this model," and how OSSE will determine the effectiveness of LSN. DCPS recommends including language around OSSE's process for evaluating the effectiveness of the targeted support and the process of course-correction if the model is determined to be not effective. DCPS would also like clarity on how the evaluation will inform the "PD for leaders of schools identified for OSSE intervention" mentioned in the table on p.64-65.**
68, 70, 98, 110	The quarterly progress monitoring reviews: what does this entail, what is the purpose of these reviews, and who will attend these? Are these in addition to the biannual, in-person meetings with leadership from DCPS and PCSB to discuss the progress of priority and focus schools? If the quarterly progress monitoring reviews are separate from the biannual in-person meetings and the LEAs need to attend, DCPS feels strongly that this would be an administrative burden, a regulatory and procedural redundancy that will distract the DCPS and school leaders from turnaround work.
68, 87	Reward Schools: One of the criteria under "Schools with Reward status" is "schools that have 'beaten the odds' and demonstrate the strong performance of students typically considered 'at-risk'." What does this mean? How is OSSE determining this? Also, while DCPS appreciates the recognition and the opportunity for Reward schools to apply for additional grants, the conditions for receiving the grant are burdensome for the schools and school leaders/staff will not have the capacity to coach other schools. However, they could be invited to participate on a panel during the LEA Institutes on an opt-in basis.
68	Strengthened Monitoring of Priority and Focus Schools: One of the possible OSSE actions of systemic improvements is "changing policies that hinder meaningful and sustainable change." DCPS recommends revising this to state "changing state-level policies."
69	Strengthened Monitoring of Priority and Focus Schools: It states that for the biannual in-person meetings with the LEAs, "OSSE will develop a framework for leading these conversations, structured by clear protocols and standards for evidence." DCPS recommends adding, "in collaboration with LEAs" to the sentence. DPCS would also like more clear process and procedure for the biannual meetings outlined in the waiver.
75	Summary: the year indicated for the inclusion of science in accountability should be corrected to 2017 (SY16-17, the assessment will be administered in 2017).

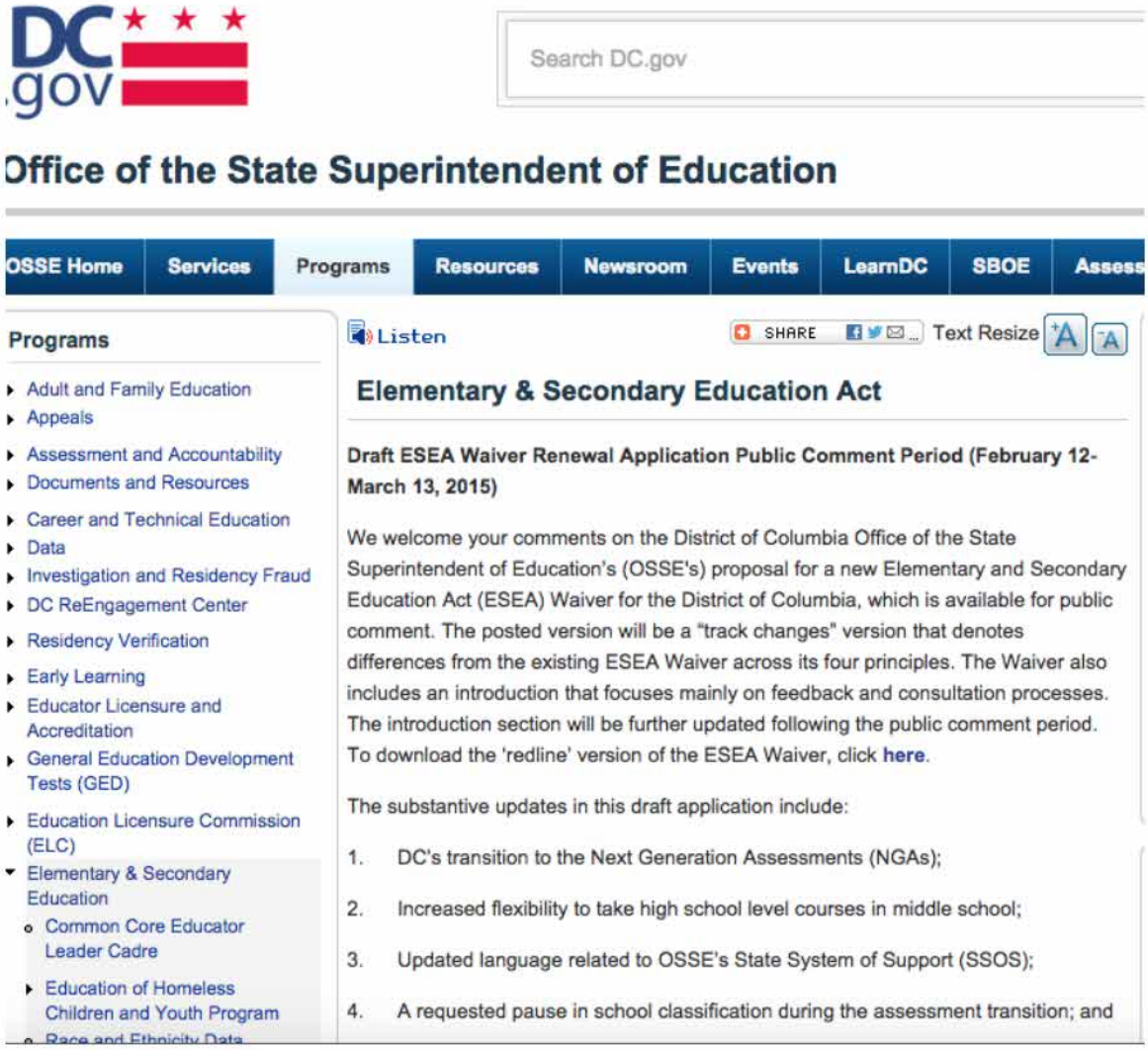
78-79	**SEA Accountability System: Identification and Classification: Need more clarification on the exit criteria for SIG schools moving forward, since it was excluded in the waiver. DCPS would also like clarity on how OSSE will ensure alignment of identification and exit criteria or SIG schools with the rest of the schools.**
79	Calculating Index Values: Table 2.B.i, should be revised for PARCC
82, 83, 88	Cut Score and Classification: the cut scores for Priority school identification and exit criteria should align. This creates a lot of confusion.
83	**Under the steps for identifying Focus schools, it states that 10% of the schools in the District will be identified as Focus (in addition to Priority). Since we know most of the Priority and Focus schools are DCPS schools, DCPS recommends revisiting the business rules for identifying Priority and Focus schools to limit the number of schools who require targeted support. Furthermore, DCPS recommends placing a threshold for identifying Focus schools whose identified subgroup makes up the majority of the school. For example, if an identified subgroup makes up 80% or more of the entire school population, the subgroup shouldn't really be considered as a subgroup but a majority.**
89	Table 2.D.i.1: the title of the table includes SY2012-13. Were the numbers in the table updated to reflect more recent numbers? If so, should the title be revised?
89, 103	**Number of Priority schools being identified: the spirit of the waiver is to provide meaningful targeted support to Priority schools. At this point, DCPS has a large number of schools identified as Priority/Focus. We recommend that the OSSE identifies the minimum federal requirement of Priority schools from the DOE (5%) so the LEA can faithfully fulfill the requirements outlined in the Waiver. DCPS also recommends discussing methods for re-identifying Priority schools who have exited. Schools should not be reclassified as Priority based on one year's data.**
92	It states that "Priority schools will be required to implement all seven turnaround principles using intervention strategies that are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress," but it is extremely challenging to focus on 7 areas all at the same time, or they may just need to focus on a few principles to turnaround their school. DCPS recommends schools should have the flexibility to implement the turnaround principles they see fit upon LEA approval.
97	**Timeline for exiting status: DCPS needs more clarity around the allotted time for exiting Priority (and Focus) status and how the allowed planning year is taken into account. If the Priority schools are getting one year for planning, they should be given 4 years to exit status. OSSE also needs to clarify how this timeline will be affected by PARCC timeline (results won't be available until October of the following school year, so when would LEA/schools be notified of their new status and how will this impact the exiting timeline?).**
97-98, 108	**Mid-year/End-of-Year report submission due date: The transition to PARCC will move back the timeline for identification and planning/implementation so how will this affect the site visits and the report submission? DCPS recommends not specifying the due dates. Furthermore, DCPS recommends that Focus schools receive the rest of the school year for planning (identification in November/December, rest of the school year for planning) and Priority schools receive a year a half for planning.**
101, 104	**Inconsistency in timeline for OSSE intervention: p.101 states that "if a priority school fails to meet the exit criteria after two full years of implementation," but p.104 states that "if a Priority school meets the exit criteria at the end of each of the originally planned three years of implementation, then the school will exit priority status at the end of the original three-year implementation period." DCPS recommends that OSSE do not intervene until after 3 full years of implementation, which is after Year 4 if Year 1 is considered as planning year.**

104	**For SIG schools that implemented the Restart or Closure model, they might not have all components of the classification status each year (i.e. Eastern). DCPS recommends revising the language in the added section under bullet point 2 to "The school met at least one component of the exit criteria for every year of which it had a School Index Score or graduation rate following the implementation of the model."**
109	**Differentiated Interventions for Subgroups: for schools who are identified as Focus because of a subgroup other than ELL and SPED, there could be legal ramifications for offering differentiated support to individual subgroups based on race or FARM status because DCPS is not able to differentiate support by racial/economic subgroups. DCPS recommends that only ELL and SPED be used for identification of Focus schools.**
111	**OSSE intervention timeline: DCPS recommends that OSSE do not intervene until after 2 full years of implementation, which is after Year 3 if Year 1 is considered as planning year. In addition, DCPS believes that considering a Focus school for closure because of a subgroup's performance is punitive and recommends revising the language, "Determine if closure of alternative governance is required."**
117	Revise the language in line 2 from "DC CAS assessments" to "PARCC assessments".
119	Building DC OSSE Capacity: The items listed under this section are all what OSSE will provide for the LEAs, not how OSSE will build their own capacity as an SEA to support their LEAs.

Principle 3

The Office of School Turnaround and Performance (OSTP) and the Office of Data and Strategy (ODS) strongly recommend that OSSE follow up with the Office of Human Capital (OHC) to review the revisions in this section.

ESEA FLEXIBILITY WAIVER RENEWAL APPLCATION
ATTACHMENT 3 – COPY OF NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



http://osse.dc.gov/service/elementary-secondary-education-act

ESEA FLEXIBILITY WAIVER RENEWAL APPLCATION ATTACHMENT R-1

2015 ESEA Waiver Renewal Engagement

January 2015

- January 7 – Discussion with the State Board of Education Presentation
- January 16 – Discussion with the Title 1 Committee of Practitioners
- January 21 – DC State Board of Education Public Meeting Presentation
- January 22 – LEA Meeting
- January 26 – Kickoff of the DC ESEA Waiver Renewal & Equitable Access Plan Stakeholder Engagement Session
- January 29 – ESEA Waiver Renewal & Equitable Access Plan Webinar

February 2015

- February 5 – Accountability Working Group Session #1: Introduction and Metrics
- February 6 –ESEA Waiver Renewal Webinar
- February 12 – SBOE/OSSE Stakeholder Community Meeting, Ward 2
- February 18 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with KIPP DC
- February 19 – OSSE and Parent Community Conversations at Woodridge Elementary & Middle School
- February 20 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with Friends Of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS)
- February 21 SBOE/OSSE Stakeholder Community Meeting at Stuart Hobson Middle, Ward 6
- February 23 – OSSE Parent and Community Conversations at Columbia Heights Education
- February 24 – Accountability Working Session #2
- February 25 – OSSE Parent and Community Conversations at Paul PCS

- February 26 – OSSE Parent and Community Conversations at Mundo Verde PCS
- February 26 – OSSE Parent and Community Conversations at Bruce Monroe Elementary
- February 26 – OSSE Parent and Community Conversations at Powell Bilingual Elementary
- February 26 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with Maya Angelou School
- February 27 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with Roots PCS
- February 28 – SBOE/OSSE Stakeholder Community Meeting at Next Step PCS, Ward 1

March 2015

- March 4 – OSSE Parent and Community Conversations at Friendship Southeast Elementary
- March 7 – SBOE/OSSE Stakeholder Community Meeting , Ward 8
- March 9 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with DCPS
- March 10 – Discussion with the Washington Teacher's Union
- March 11 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with Next Step PCS
- March 11 – Science Educator Leader Cadre Meeting
- March 12 – Waiver Walk-Through and Feedback Meeting with PCSB
- March 19-Consultation with Title I Committee of Practitioners
- March 19- Consultation with Title III Advisory Committee

ESEA FLEXIBILITY WAIVER RENEWAL APPLCATION ATTACHMENT R-2

List of Priority schools for implementation in 2015-2016, based on the most recent data.

1. Aiton Elementary
2. Amidon Bowen S.
3. Anacostia High School
4. Ballou High School
5. C.W. Harris Elementary
6. Cardoza High School
7. Coolidge High School
8. Drew Elementary
9. Dunbar High School
10. Friendship PCS Blow Pierce Elementary
11. Garfield Elementary School
12. Hendley Elementary
13. Houston Elementary
14. Johnson John Hayden Middle School
15. Kelly Miller Middle School
16. Kramer Middle School
17. Langdon Education Campus
18. LaSalle Backus Education Center
19. Luke C. Moore High School
20. Malcolm X Elementary
21. Maya Angelou PCS
22. Moten Elementary
23. Options Public Charter School
24. Patterson Elementary
25. Roosevelt Elementary
26. Savoy Elementary School
27. Stanton Elementary School
28. Turner Elementary
29. Washington Metro High School
30. Woodson HD High School

List of Focus schools for implementation in 2015-2016, based on the most recent data.

1. Bancroft ES
2. Achievement Preparatory PCS-Elementary
3. Bruce Monroe ES at Park View
4. Capital City Lower PCS
5. Capitol Hill Montessori School at Logan
6. Excel Academy PCS
7. Friendship PCS Woodridge Elementary
8. Friendship PCS Woodson Collegiate Academy
9. Garrison ES
10. H D Cooke ES
11. Hart MS
12. Kimball ES
13. King, M L ES
14. Langley EC
15. Miner ES
16. National Collegiate Prep PCS
17. Noyes EC
18. Payne ES
19. Richard Wright PCS for Journalism and Media Arts
20. Seaton ES
21. Simon ES
22. Smothers ES
23. Takoma EC
24. Tyler ES
25. Walker Jones EC
26. Whittier EC
27. Wilson HS